DIFFERENT WORLDS

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APR/MAY 1980
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MAGAZINE OF ADVENTURE ROLE-PLAYING GAMES

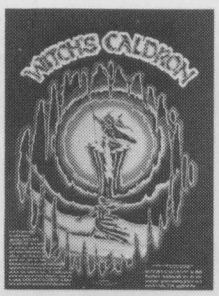


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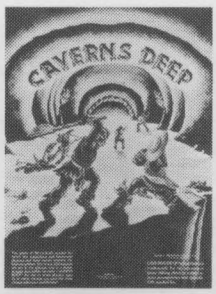
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StarMaster

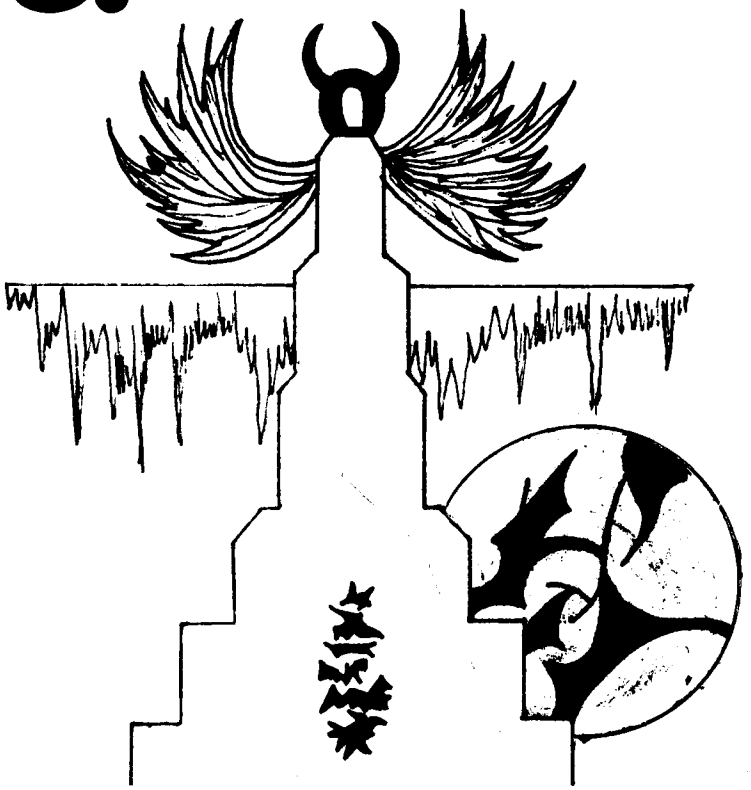
Air screams around your ships as they enter the atmosphere. Missile-launchers fire deafeningly to port and starboard while atmosphere-fighters drop in shrieking dives from their hangers below. Warriors, tightly clenching their weapons, check their pressure suits one last time and climb in grim silence into their landing shuttles. In the distance five more heavy cruisers of your empire are firing and unloading their cargo, their hulls gleaming crimson in the light of the red sun above.

This is not a drill. Already laser and missile fire from the mile-wide guardian fortresses below have turned the sky into an exploding nightmare of smoke, fire, and fragmented metal. Planes and shuttles twist and dodge down towards a landscape rapidly becoming an inferno of flame and radiation.

This is no mere raid. For years your people had explored nearby systems without violence, trading technology to the primitive civilizations there in exchange for raw materials. Some species had even thought you gods.

Then you met the Aeratang. Merciless, brutal, they destroyed your exploring ships and began to slaughter your colonies. But you found their home planet and launched the greatest fleet your kind ever built to carry the war to your enemy. To fight for your very survival.

Will it be enough?



Starmaster is a correspondence game of galactic exploration, diplomacy, and conquest allowing for interaction not only between each player and the worlds of the galaxy, but between the players themselves.

New players begin further out from the Galactic Center than established players allowing them to develop themselves among equals. You may lead a powerful reptilian race, carving out a vast empire of colony and subject worlds; or perhaps an insectoid species, engaged in a holy crusade to convert the galaxy to the worship of their many-legged god.

As chosen ruler of your people, you must decide what diplomatic and military policies will be followed in order to lead your kind to dominance among the sentient beings of the galaxy.

The galaxies of StarMaster are a complete fantasy environment of solar systems, with geographies ranging from worlds near absolute zero to worlds where rivers of molten tungsten bubble, with technologies spanning from rock-throwing cave-dwellers to advanced Elder Races with near-godlike abilities.

Nor is the StarMaster environment limited in terms of playing area. There are multiple galaxies allowing for extra-galactic invasions across the voids. There are both natural and constructed gateways to (and from!) other dimensions and parallel universes.

StarMaster is limitless in possibilites, bounded only by imagination! It is a game where, literally, anything is possible.

StarMaster offers these features:

- Design your species as if you could have directed evolution to this moment.
- Design your homeworld in terms of temperature, atmosphere, and mass.
- Choose your government and social order.
- You decide the production for all worlds of your empire, building colonizing ships, merchantmen, warships, warriors, and fortresses.
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The galaxies are dotted with the ruins of Elder civilizations lacking the strength to master the stars. Can you lead your world to greatness where so many others fell short?

StarMaster may be entered for $10.00 which includes the first three turns, a rule booklet, and all necessary material (except return postage). Thereafter, turns are $2.50 each. If dissatisfied after the first turn, you may return the material for a full refund. A rule booklet may be purchased separately for $3.50.

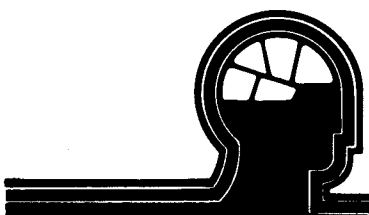
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Sacramento. CA 95821

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City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____



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DIFFERENT WORLDS 7

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EDITORIAL

THE ROLE OF MINIATURES IN ROLE-PLAYING



iniature figures have been integral to role-playing since the beginning. Indeed, both Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson point to miniatures wargaming as the prime source of the mechanics in *Dungeons & Dragons*. And anyone stepping into a game store can quickly see that collecting and painting miniatures is a major part of the hobby. The dollars spent on miniatures, paints, brushes, and other supplies may be actually be more than the sum spent on role-playing game rules, scenarios, magazines, and gaming aids. Many now play RPGs simply as a result of their inquiring: "What do you do with all these miniatures figures?"

Miniatures, well-painted, enhance any role-playing adventure. The visual contrast of one's character with a monster is important. Herein comes puppet theater, the acting out of a role through a miniature figure. *Different Worlds* recognizes the value miniatures have in our hobby and will devote much attention to them in this and future issues.

There are presently a plethora of figures available for role-playing and more are being released every month. We all have a favorite character of a certain race and sex, wearing a certain type of armor and/or helmet, and wielding a certain weapon. But all too often we have an unnecessarily difficult time trying to match the character with a figure. Catalogs do not give detailed descriptions of available figures and photographs usually inadequately give the details we want. Gamers usually end up haunting game stores, spending hours trying to pick out the figure with the proper features. With this issue, *DW*, with the help of John T. Sapienza, will start on a project of adequately describing available figures, so *DW* readers will know exactly what is on the market. This is a long-term project. We hope it matches your wishes.

Happy gaming,

Tadashi Ehara

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Beginner's Brew; Specialty Mages; My Life & Role-Playing; The World of Archaeron; The Cult of Geo; What is a Role-Playing Game?; Quest for the Sacred Melita.

Nr. 2 Apr/May 1979
Beginner's Brew; Review of *Legacy*; Specialty Mages Part 2; Character Name Tables; My Life & Role-Playing Continued!; *Starships & Spacemen* Expansion Kit; Arduin, Bloody Arduin; The Cacodemon Cult; Dramatic Structure of RPGs; A Letter from Gigi.

Nr. 3 Jun/Jul 1980
Review of *Bushido*; My Life & Role-Playing 3; Research and Rules; Specialty Mages Part 3; Role-Playing: How to Do It; Druid's Valley; The Three Feathered Rivals Cult; New Clerical Cure System; A Letter from Gigi.

Nr. 4 Aug/Sep 1979
Games to Gold; Beginner's Brew; Kirk on Karit 2; Enchanted Weapons Table; A Perspective on Role-Play; Waha's Quest; Letter from Gigi.

Nr. 5 Oct/Nov 1979
Arduin for the Masses; Games to Gold Update; Developing a Character's Appearance; Some Greek Gods: The Cult of Apollo; My Life and Role-Playing Cont.; Encounter Systems; To Be or Not To Be a Pure Strain Human That Is the Question!; Clippings; A Letter from Gigi.

Nr. 6 Dec/Jan 1980
Gangster: An Overview; Super Rules for *Superhero: 2044*; Finding Level in *RuneQuest*; How to Make Monsters Interesting; Vardy Combat System Part 1; The World of *Crane*; Insanity Table; The Cult of Gestetner; A Letter from Gigi.

LOOKING FOR MORE GAMERS IN YOUR LIFE?

Looking for other gamers? *Different Worlds* will run notices for our readers that are looking for more players for their games. Simply send us your name, address (with zip!) and/or phone number (with area code!). If you only send a phone number you must at least give your city, state, and zip. Give the RPG systems that you are interested in (if you are also interested in playing other types of games, add "general games" or "board wargames"). Let us know the number of issues in which you want the notice to appear—maximum of six to keep the list updated. If you wish to remain listed after the six issues, simply send another notice. If you do not specify the number of appearances, it will run only once. This service is open to anyone and is free until further notice.

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RFD 1
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(617) 888-5938
D&D, AD&D, Space Quest, RQ, GW, other FRP

Connecticut Game Club
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South Jersey Wargamers Assoc
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Northfield, NJ 08225

Compleat Strategist
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New York, NY 10016
Robert Sacks
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(212) 942-3572
Collation and gaming

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Box 2189
Union College
Schenectady, NY 12308
(518) 382-5497
FRP variant, boardgames

Steve List
60 Spinythorn Rd
Levittown, PA 19056
(215) 945-3447
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Elaine Normandy
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Riverdale, MD 20840
(301) 779-4752
D&D variant

Ron Maas
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Burke, VA 22015
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RQ, D&D, fantasy games

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(404) 457-7209
Forming D&D club

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2776 Frontier Trl
Chamblee, GA 30341
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(214) 561-3266

BEGINNER'S BREW

THE COMPLEAT ADVENTURER

Welcome to the second tabulation of all the more popular role-playing games (RPGs) and magazines available. There has been many notable additions to the list originally published in *Different Worlds 1* a year ago. These additions reflect the health of adventure gaming. A new addition this year is a list of miniature manufacturers who cast figures of interest to RPGers. Write them for their catalogs and tell them *Different Worlds* sent you.

This list is complete, as far as we know. If there are any errors or omissions, let us know.

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Archive Miniatures
1111 S Railroad Ave
San Mateo, CA 94402
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Balboa Game Co
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Warlock

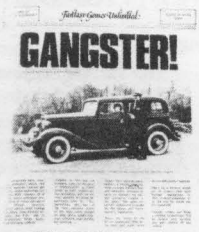
RuneQuest

Chaosium, Inc
PO Box 6302
Albany, CA 94706
RuneQuest (RQ)
Dark Worlds (in preparation)
Elric RuneQuest (in prepartion)

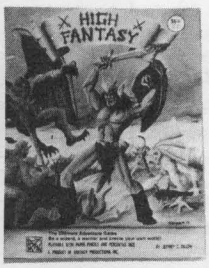
Erisian Games
PO Box 14358
Albuquerque, NM 87191
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Excalibre Games, Inc
PO Box 29171
Brooklyn Ctr, MN 55429
Adventures in Fantasy (AIF)





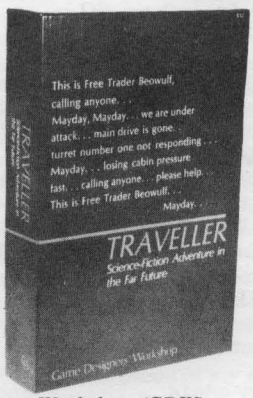
Fantasy Games Unlimited, Inc (FGU)
PO Box 182
Roslyn, NY 11576
Chivalry & Sorcery (C&S)
Bunnies & Burrows (B&B)
Flash Gordon & the Warriors of Mongo
Starships & Spacemen (S&S)
Villains & Vigilantes (V&V)
Gangster!
Skull & Crossbones



Fantasy Productions, Inc
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Indianapolis, IN 46227
High Fantasy



Flying Buffalo, Inc (FBI)
PO Box 1467
Scottsdale, AZ 85252
Tunnels & Trolls (T&T)
Monsters! Monsters! (M!M!)
Starfaring


This is Free Trader Beowulf, calling anyone. . . Mayday, Mayday. . . we are under attack. . . main drive is gone. . . turret number one not responding. . . Mayday. . . losing cabin pressure fast. . . calling anyone. . . please help. . . This is Free Trader Beowulf. . . Mayday. . .
TRAVELLER
Science-Fiction Adventure in the Far Future
Game Designers' Workshop

Game Designers Workshop (GDW)
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Normal, IL 61761
En Garde!
Traveller

Gamescience
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Superhero 2044
Empire of the Petal Throne (EPT)
Old West Gunfight

Grimoire Games
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Berkeley, CA 94704
Arduin Grimoire

Heritage USA, Inc
9840 Monroe Dr (Bldg 116)
Dallas, TX 75220
Star Trek
Heroes of Middle Earth (in preparation)

Legacy Press
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Legacy

Metagaming
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Austin, TX 78761
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Simulations Publications, Inc (SPI)
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Bushido

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Los Angeles, CA 90066

APA-DUD
Robert Sacks
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New York, NY 10034

The Apprentice
David Berman
24 Seguin St
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1J 6P3



Ares
Simulations Publications, Inc
257 Park Ave S
New York, NY 10010



The Dragon (TD)
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PO Box 110
Lk Geneva, WI 53147

Gryphon
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PO Box 820
La Puente, CA 91747

The Journal of the Travellers' Aid Society
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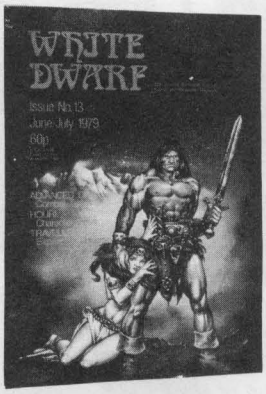
The Judges Guild Journal (tJGJ) and
The Dungeoneer
Judges Guild
1165 N University Ave
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The Lords of Chaos (TLOC)
Nicolai C. Shapero
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England

The Wild Hunt (TWH)
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Wyrm's Footnotes (WF) and
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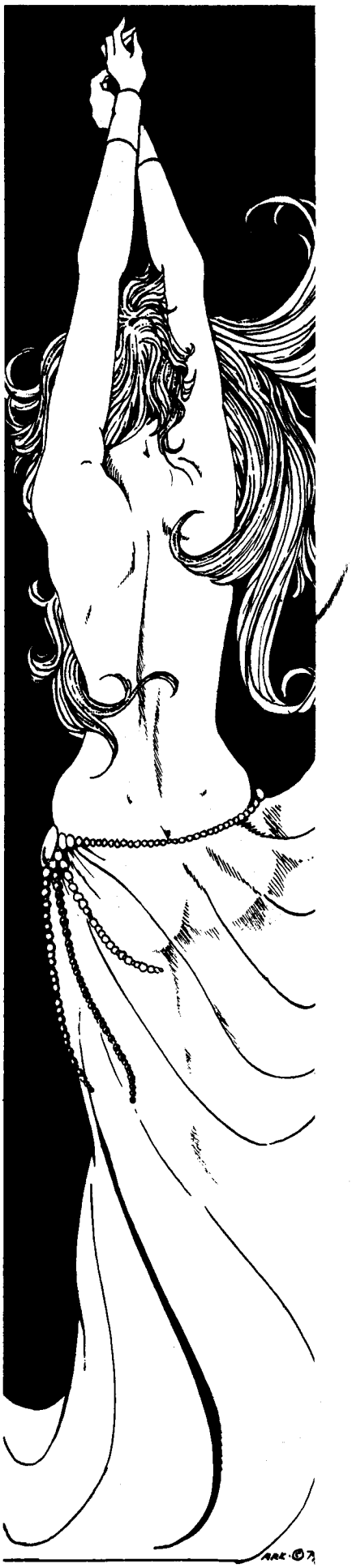




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Pine Plns, NY 12567

Ral Partha Enterprises
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Cincinnati, OH 45227



TEN DAYS IN THE ARENA OF

KHAZAN

A Tunnels & Trolls Campaign

By Ken St. Andre

The spider was about the size of a large dog, and it ran across the sand of the arena very quickly. A poisonous pus-yellow saliva drooled from its clacking madibles, and a thrill of horror went through the crowd as it was the first monster they had seen in several days.

The victim stood in the center of the arena, lightly swinging his flail at about knee-level. Carver of Gull was not a big man, but he was not the easy meal that the spider thought he would be. A wizard would have noted the magic emanating from him, especially from a certain emerald that Carver had placed in an iron headband that he wore to keep his long brown hair from tumbling down into his his eyes.

The spider reached its quarry and pounced, and at the same moment Carver brought his flail crashing into it with a motion that was too fast to see. There was a sickening splat that could be heard throughout the arena, and then the spider was only a lifeless hairy blob. For good measure Carver hit it several times, until there was no chance that it could still live. Then he saluted the crowd, who were cheering him enthusiastically and exited to collect his winnings.

CARVER OF GULL

The City of Gull on the Island of Phoron lies far south of Khazan and beyond the empire of Lerotra'hh, Death Goddess. (Gull was created by Mike Stackpole as a solitaire adventure which is currently the top of the *Tunnels & Trolls* solitaire line, with the finest art, the most adventures, and the highest price of all the solitaires.) Carver of Gull, a former net-master in the Arena of Gull, was used to fighting before crowds. He had slain many a man and risen to the third level of proficiency in warriorhood when he came up against the one-handed man with the emerald. That had been his toughest fight, but in the end the fellow couldn't keep his balance on the bouncing net and Carver had triumphed, claiming the emerald for his own. The jewel was enchanted – Carver had taken it to a wizard for analysis – he learned that whoever wore or carried it would be fantastically lucky in combat. The wizard offered him 1800 gold pieces for it, but Carver refused. It occurred to him that with the help of this gem he might be able to become a champion in Khazan, and so he left the City of Terrors, taking the long sea voyage north to Khazan.

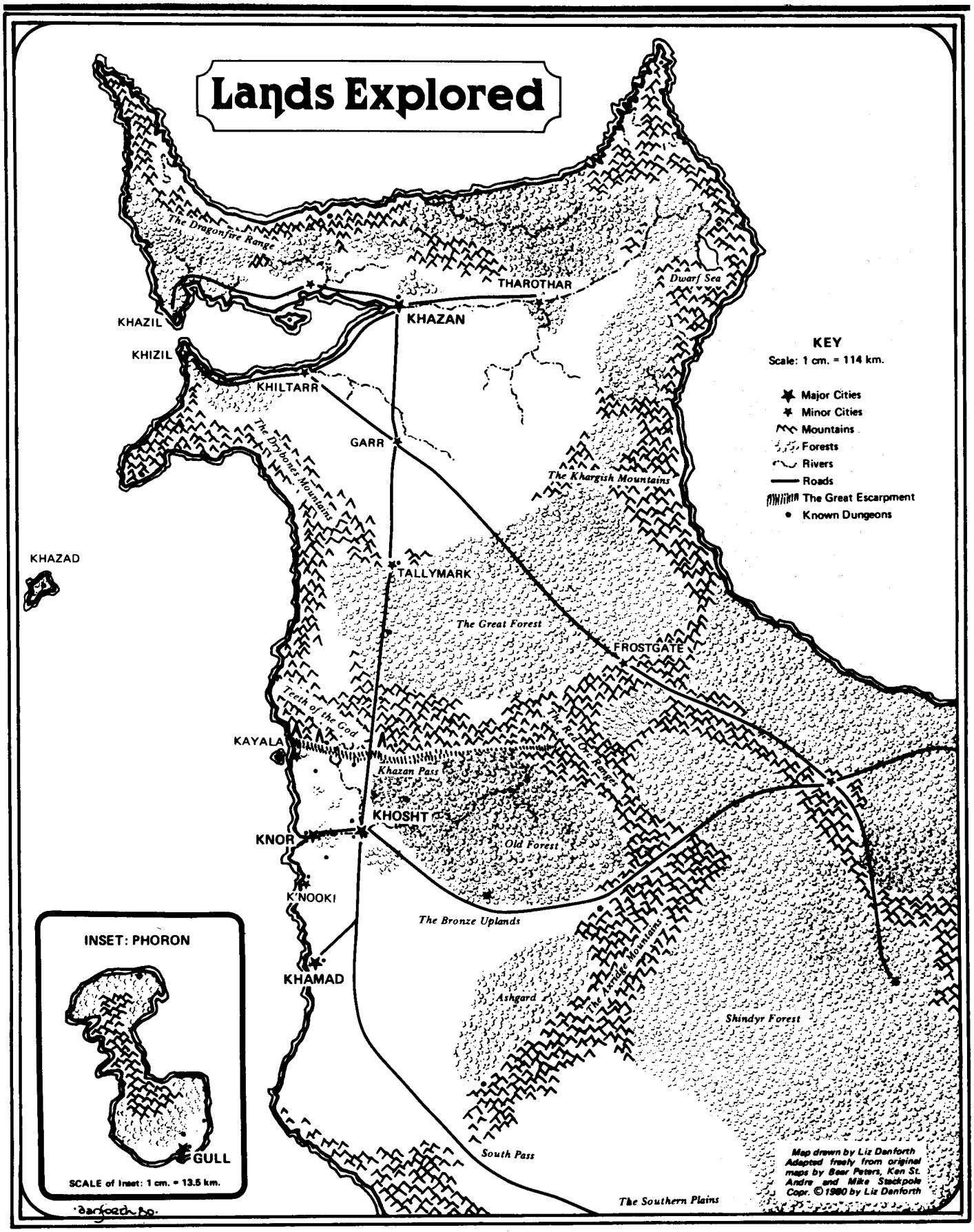
He had arrived with only 300 GP left, but when he learned that the odds against him in the first fight were 27 to 1, he had immediately wagered 200 of his 300 GP on himself. And now he was a rich man, because in addition to winning 5400 GP, his prize had also been phenomenal: an additional 5000 GP in cash, plus a huge garnet worth 2000 GP, and twelve silver-tipped enchanted arrows. He took a luxurious apartment, had the garnet set alongside the emerald in his headband, bought a few extra weapons and got ready for his second combat.

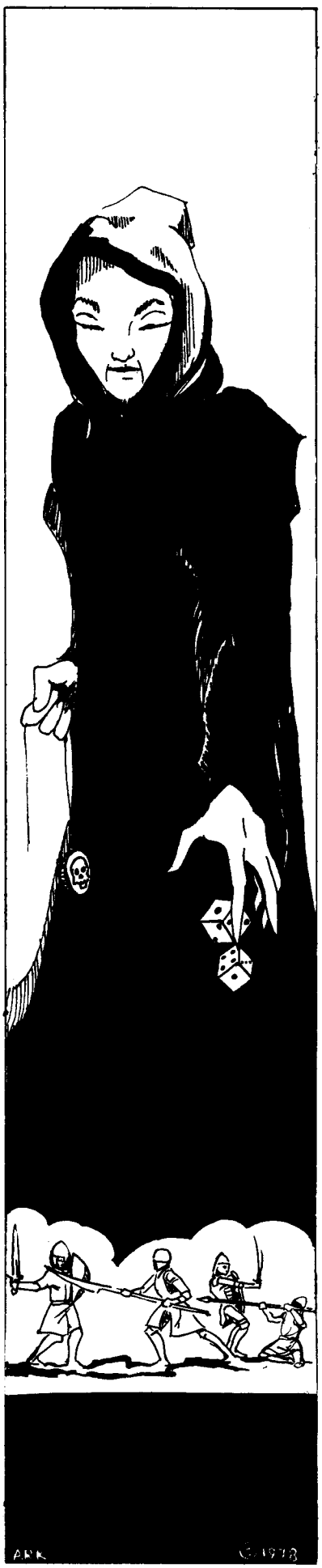
* * *

Mitokris the Orc, wizard-warrior of the Khazan army came into the arena knowing that the odds were 8 to 1 in his favor. His opponent, Carver of Gull, a short fellow with a flail and a dagger didn't seem like any match for him. He decided to enchant his scimitar and fight the stranger, even though the spell would leave him a bit weak. It was a great mistake.

As the tall Orc closed with the short, scarred warrior, the flail licked out with blinding speed and ripped the sword from his hand, and in the next moment a knife was buried deeply between his ribs. The Orc had not bothered to wear any armor, not having the strength for that and spell-casting at the same time. Unconscious from the shock, he was carried off to be healed while Carver collected

PRESENTS


Lands Explored
The Dragonfire Range
THAROTHAR
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The Khargish Mountains
KHAZAD
TALLYMARK
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KAYALA
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KHOSHT
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KHAMAD
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Ashgard
Shindyr Forest
South Pass
The Southern Plains
KEY
Scale: 1 cm. = 114 km.
Major Cities
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INSET: PHORON
GULL
SCALE of Inset: 1 cm. = 13.5 km.
Map drawn by Liz Danforth
Adapted freely from original maps by Bear Peters, Ken St. Andre and Mike Stackpole
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another rich reward. What with bets and prizes he made 21,000 GP on that one fight, and his reputation was well established.

ORCS

The difference between Orcs and men in the *T&T* world is not so great. It is said that at some time far in the past Orcs could not stand direct sunlight, but they no longer have that weakness. About the same mass and height as men, Orcs are recognized by their lack of head and body hair except for vestigial eyebrows. Their skin is gray or grayish-brown and tends to be rough and scaly, while their body odor is something fierce and bestial. In a world dominated by Humans, they tend to be regarded as monsters, but Lerotra'hh, Death Goddess of Khazan, has a fondness for monsters (being one herself) and discrimination on account of kindred is sternly forbidden in royal Khazan. Most Orcs are members of wandering nomadic tribes that inhabit the wastelands of the continent of Rhalph, or else dwell subterraineously in the tunnel complexes that infest the landscape. They have better darkness vision than men and a far better sense of smell, and generally have little fear of death or wounds – not being very imaginative – thus making excellent fighters. Few of them have the talent for magic, and those who do often make mistakes or judgmental errors such as Mitokris did when he chose to meet Carver with weapons instead of blasting him at long range with a death-dealing spell like the "Take that you fiend!"

* * *

Carver's third fight was against a normal Orcish warrior in chain mail and using a scimitar. The Orc looked like the superior fighter, being both larger and armored, while Carver still chose to fight in his loin-cloth with only a flail and a dagger, the bettors of the city had learned their lesson and the odds now were just a straight 1 to 1. The Orc lasted for a few minutes while Carver dodged his blade or parried it with his dagger, but when the man from Gull finally struck, his flail was just a blur which ended in the Orc's helmeted head, which disintegrated upon impact.

THE EMPIRE

Khazan, largest city of the Empire of Khazan, is about 1000 years old. It was first built by the Wizard Khazan who ruled it until the year 666 of the city when he was overthrown and slain by Lerotra'hh and her hordes of Trolls and Orcs. They came out of the Dragonfire Range of mountains which lies several hundred miles north of the city near the northern coast. Other cities in the empire include Khosht (which is the usual base for my own gang of *T&T* players: Bear Peters, Liz Danforth, Mike Stackpole, Steve McAllister, Ugly John Carver, and others). Other known cities are Khmad, Knor, and Tharothar, not to mention several others that no one has ever done anything with. Rhalph is a mountainous, dragon-shaped land that is mostly wilderness. Tribes of Elves live in all the major forest areas, while wandering Orcs people the steppes and deserts. The Trolls, Ogres, Giants, and Dragons tend to lurk in the more inaccessible mountains, such as the Khargish range east of the forest of Quendar. Other races such as Hobbits live in isolated valleys or else underground in the vast caverns that dot the landscape.

For an evil ruler, and there is no doubt that she is evil, Lerotra'hh is remarkably benevolent, preferring to keep most of her perversions and bloodlust home in Khazan where every day is Arena Day. As long as the agreed upon tribute continues to pour into her coffers, she does not molest the rest of the world. If the tribute slackens, an enormous army of Orcs, Trolls, Giants, and even Dragons will descend upon the unfortunate city and replace the current power-structure with someone more loyal to Lerotra'hh. There is hardly ever a general massacre of all inhabitants – if they killed everyone who would produce the wealth that Khazan needs to survive?

* * *

Rogatine was a Giant – an old hand at arena fighting who had never been defeated. Size was most of it. Standing 30 feet tall, most of his opponents found themselves unable to reach higher than his knee, they found themselves unable to strike any serious wound until his enormous spatula-shaped club came down to flatten them.

Carver, however, was not about to get flattened. He had purchased a new weapon for this fight, a wavy-bladed greatsword called a flamberge. With it he meant to cut the giant off at the ankles, and once he had him down, finish him.

But the combat didn't go according to plan for either fighter. Each time the Giant crashed his club to earth the crowd would heave a collective gasp, knowing that if that ponderous mass of silver-edged wood ever connected with the little man from Gull he would be no more than a red stain on the sand. But it never connected, for Carver dodged inwards towards the giant's feet, actually running up on one and hewing with all his might at the ankle.

Now it must be mentioned that Rogatine was no naked savage, and that even Giants can get boots made for them in the city of Khazan, though it takes a whole cowhide for each boot. So when Carver struck he was trying to cut through thick lether as well as Giant flesh and bone, and he failed. The sword remained stuck in the Giant's boot leather, and Carver found himself dodging for his life as an enormous hand tried to grasp him.

There came a thunder of blows and stomps, with Carver flinging himself madly to the left and right to evade them. Seven times he dodged, but the last kick just nicked him and flung him 15 feet through the air to land on his back. Rogatine caught him in one step and stopped to laugh as he aimed his enormous club for a killing blow that couldn't be evaded.

Most of the crowd didn't see what happened next. They were all focusing on the Giant and not on his victim. To their amazement the Giant let out a ringing shout of pain, clutched at his head and fell over backwards with a thump that made the walls shake. Carver stood up and brushed the dirt off himself. He wrenched his flamberge out of the Giant's boot and gathered up the flail he had dropped. Then he walked up to the head of the Giant, tugged aside the hand that covered his face, and extracted his sax (a very long, poorly-balanced dagger, almost a short sword) from Rogatine's eye. It had gone in to the hilt and penetrated to the brain, killing the Giant almost instantly. It had been the best most unbelievable throw of his life.

GIANTS

Giants are inherently magical creatures. They have to be just to survive. The square-cube law of area and volume should make their existance impossible, but like many of the monsters of the *T&T* world, they defy conventional Earthly physics and flourish. For one thing, they are not truly proportionately heavier according to size. For another, their bones have the lightness and tensile strength of high-quality steel instead of mere calcium. For third, their blood is super-efficient conductor of food and oxygen, being more like an acid than the blood that flows in human veins.

Even so, Giants are extremely rare among the population of the Empire of Khazan, well under 1/10 of 1%. And, if they were not protected by monarchs like Lerotra'hh who likes to use them in her army, and by some of the great wizards who are the only gods of this world, they would undoubtedly have died out. Their average height is about five times that of a man while their mass and strength are both about 20 times as great.

* * *

Carver's next fight was with an Ogre. It is hardly worth retelling. He easily dodged its clumsy attack and one smash of flail to head stretched it out on the sand as a fatality.

It was a bad day for Ogres in general. The very next fight pitted Shewolf of Khosht, a very famous female warrior against two of them. Carver admired the way she dodged their angry rushes and struck them down. Her blows struck with super-human force, and it was clear to Carver and the rest of the watching crowd that Shewolf was a magically-augmented hero. During the weeks that Carver had been fighting in the arena Shewolf had also been making her reputation. She hadn't lost a single fight, and she was the first person this year to win seven consecutive matches. The more knowledgable fight fans were beginning to lay wagers as to whether she or Carver would be the first to finish all ten fights that it took to become a Champion of Khazan.

SHEWOLF

Shewolf was one of my first characters, and the only one for quite a while to survive more than one or two delves. Originally, she was a farm girl who went on her first delve armed only with a scythe. On one of her early adventures she picked up a wolf-cub named Gray Eyes and the two combined to make a very effective team.

At the time of this fight, Shewolf had been adventuring for almost 20 years of game time, figuring game time as five times as fast as regular Earth time. She was about 38 and had achieved the 8th level of warriordom. Her attributes, nothing unusual to begin with, were now all well above normal: Strength 23; IQ 21; Luck 56; Constitution 57; Dexterity 24; and Charisma 26. Like *RuneQuest* and *Dungeons & Dragons*, Humans starting attributes are based on a roll of 3D6. Unlike the other two systems, attributes may be increased indefinitely, both by magic won on delves or adventures or by level bonuses gained when advancing a level. Thus, characters who survive to reach even the medium levels of advancement become truly awesome when compared to basic monsters and warriors, while those who reach the upper levels become something straight out of Marvel comics – superheroes in a medieval setting.

Shewolf, whose greatest single magical benefit is a suit of demon-armor (scale armor a la Red Sonya) that will protect her from 614 hits in combat. This armor is not conventional metal, but is truly a demon formed to fit her, and every hit the armor has to take is another point off the demon's constitution. Yes, readers, some truly wonderful things can be done with the magic available in *T&T*, but if your number is up, you'll die no matter how well protected you may be. These battles started off with a bad omen for Shewolf as her lifelong companion, Gray Eyes, currently a 5th level wolf, was killed by an ordinary Human in his first combat.

* * *

Since it was getting on toward the end of the ten fights he was due for, Carver decided to protect himself a little better than he had for the previous conflicts. He bought himself a good suit of plate armor, and also had his flail enchanted by the arena wizards for the next combat.

But his next battle was a laugher. Fights in the arena are randomly determined, except for the 8th, 9th, and 10th, and this time Carver found himself matched against a Hobbit. He was unpleasantly surprised however, when the Hobbit managed to duck the flail and land on Carver's chest madly hacking with a sax. Then the Human's plate armor stood him in good stead, turning all blows and breaking the knife, while Carver strangled his furry-footed attacker. He won no applause for that from the crowd, and a small prize of 500 GP, but he cared not, for by now he was so wealthy that arena awards were only trifles. He resolved to continue to buy enchantment for both weapon and armor in each fight to come.

HOBBITS

I doubt if Tolkien would recognize either Hobbits, or Orcs, the way we play them in *T&T*. Aside from being short and furry-footed, there is almost no other resemblance. Venturesome and bold, Hobbits use their high dexterity ratings to be proficient with missile weapons, especially those requiring low strength, such as the bola or crossbow. Though Hobbits can seldom recock their own crossbows, there is usually some big fellow around to do it for them, and they make deadly marksmen.

* * *

Carver's next fight was against an ordinary Human warrior. It was no contest, and again he wasted the money he spent on enchantments, but better safe than sorry.

THE WORLD

If you pit your average Marvel superhero against your average man-in-the-street, the fight doesn't last long enough to mention. This also tends to be the case in *T&T* where one-sided combats are usually resolved by the Game Master saying "You killed them." There's no point in rolling dice when one side or the other doesn't have a prayer. Although Carver is only a 3rd level warrior, the benefit that he gets from the magic emerald which triples his Luck actually makes him tougher than Shewolf who was at the 8th level.

Perhaps I should say a little more about the *T&T* world. I am only talking about one tiny corner of it in this article – the Empire





of Khazan. The world is assumed to be quite large and mostly unexplored, certainly not mapped out the way Glorantha is. If that doesn't give your imagination enough room, there are known to be thousands of inter-universal gates connecting the *T&T* world with thousands of others. Most of these worlds are earthlike – even close parallels of the world of Khazan, where such things as languages and racial types remain constant. There are differences between the many worlds, and these differences are built into the game structure by the many GMs who create their own tunnel complexes, cities, or what have you for players to adventure in.

A few things should remain constant, like the legends of the Wizards' War. Thousands of years in the past there was a struggle for supreme power by all the great wizards of the world where Khazan lies. Tunnel complexes and gates to other realities are among the relics of that time. The shortened life spans of such kindred types as Elves and Dwarves, who were once functionally immortal, but now have only a few centuries of life are some of the other effects. The presence of unnatural monsters of many types is still another consequence. The Wizards' War had no one winner. Those who could be slain were slain – those who couldn't came to a truce, and spread themselves throughout the multiverse to rule their tunnel complexes, and castles, and cities, in effect becoming gods of all the worlds. (This explains the unwritten rule in fantasy role-playing games that the GM is God.) Needing amusement, they permit mortals to risk their lives (and sometimes their souls) adventuring in tunnels and dungeons and ruins and whatever, and reward those who do well, and punish or slay those who do poorly. These god-wizards are of all different personality types, and their whimsy is unlimited.

In a way it has proven beneficial to the world. Conflict tends to be on an individual instead of a mass scale most of the time. Conquering armies are not unheard of, but far less frequent than they would be if there weren't so many tunnels for trouble-making types to loot.

Magic is always a force to be reckoned with in the *T&T* universe. Probably 2/3 of the population has the ability to work magic if they only had the training. Since magic is so common, science has never fully developed the way it should have. Thus, there is virtually no science of medicine – when one wants anything more than first aid, one goes to a wizard. If there's no wizard around, you tend to die.

True power in the *T&T* universe lies with the Wizards Guild. While, on the surface, it seems like a fairly harmless organization such as the School Board or the Chamber of Commerce, it really controls everything. Great rulers all tend to be wizards or have very strong wizardly advisors, and most of the wizards belong to the Guild in one form or another.

* * *

Carver's sixth fight was against two Hobbits. He had no more trouble with two of them than he had with one.

DWARVES AND ELVES

Somehow our tale of blood in the arena has not gotten around to mentioning Dwarves or Elves. After Humankind, these are the two most important and numerous kindreds in the world.

The Dwarves are the industrialists. Long ago they detribalized themselves, moved away from their colonies beneath the mountains, and entered the world of men in force. They are the metal-workers, the armorers, the shipwrights, carpenters, stone-cutters, and all such craftsmen as require both strength and cunning to perform. Jewellers, masons, merchants, and warriors, Dwarves are everywhere in the *T&T* world. There are even legends that some of the ancient Dwarvish strongholds underearth remain in the remoter mountains, but if so, they are never visited by men or Elves, and so the legend is not confirmed.

For all their numbers, Dwarvish women seem to be rare. It may be that since both men and women go bearded among the Dwarves it is impossible to tell them apart. Their women, however, must exist, since I myself have had several female Dwarves in my character stable at one time or another.

Elves, on the other hand, never learned to mingle quite so freely with men. Human cities are distasteful to them, being far too dirty, smelly, and crowded for their refined sensibilities. Generally, slightly taller and fairer than men, the Elves, except when they are adventuring, tend to remain in their woodlands. It is known that they make great wizards and great historians, for their memories are incredible. The Elves of the modern *T&T* world have declined from the Great Elves of the Elder Legends, for they hardly ever live more than three or four hundred years, and they have often been known to mate with men and sometimes even with Dwarves, a thing that would have been unthinkable before the Wizards' War. There is, in fact, a known colony of Dwelfs, as they are called, upriver from Khosht.

* * *

Before Carver had his seventh combat, Shewolf came to her tenth. In a piece of final irony she was matched against a werewolf just after twilight. A huge orange moon provided plenty of light for the contestants. She stood in the center of the arena waiting, with magic weapons close at hand, for she knew that only magic could slay such a creature.

With a howl the wolfman attacked her. Calmly she waited until it was only thirty feet away, and hurled her enchanted spear. But the wolf-creature leaped above it, and she missed. Then it was upon her, and the armor she wore began to scream, as the werewolf ripped and tore at it trying to get to her tender flesh beneath.

Over and over they rolled in the sand. With the growls of the wolf-creature and the howling of the demon armor, it sounded like the death of an army. Then, Shewolf's flail shattered. In a desperate surge of strength, she kicked the beast off her and ran to where her spear had stck futilely in the sand. Then she turned to meet the foe once more.

I haven't the heart to tell you about the fight from that point on. It lasted for 22 minutes and Shewolf lost steadily. For the last two minutes she had no armor left to protect her, and it was very gory indeed. In the stands, watching, sickened, Carver vowed that he wouldn't make the same mistake. Because, if her magic spear had managed to wound the monster before it reached her, she would have been strong enough to beat it.

Rest in peace, Shewolf! You lived as a wolf, and died by a wolf.

In his seventh fight, Carver came up against a leopard with the odds 7 to 1 in his favor. As it leaped at him, he hit it with his enchanted flail and slew it with one blow.

CARNIVORES

Since *T&T* is meant to be a world of high adventure, there is a large and nasty amount of big carnivores in the animal kingdom. Some are ordinary beasts such as the leopard above; some are mythical monsters such as unicorns or griffins, and some are giant versions of things that would be harmless in their smaller state. I have a prejudice for the animals from earthly zoology and mythology, and have tried to avoid using such things as banths, North Hounds, or tribbles, but that doesn't mean that other GMs must exclude alien fauna from their worlds or tunnels. Anything that could live on an earthlike world is fair game.

* * *

Now that he had reached his eighth fight and witnessed the death of Shewolf, Carver started getting smart about his combats. Every time he entered the arena, he had every advantage that money could buy. For his eighth fight, which would be against a giant carnivorous ape, Carver purchased an arbalest, and used his enchanted arrows for the bolts. Long before the ape ever reached him, he put a crossbow bolt through its heart, and continued to escape unscathed.

MAGIC

Arena of Khazan will be, perhaps, the one programmed adventure in the *T&T* series where money really makes a difference, and the only one so far where you can bring any kind of level of character. I have always figured that in a world where magic is commonplace there would be a flourishing trade in it, with the wizards selling their spells for all

thousand GP on the fight, of which he spent 1000 to magically heal the magically-induced wound.

MONSTERS

I'm probably too much of a purist as far as world creation goes. Although a few weird things have been invented, I find that most of the monsters in the *T&T* world have been taken from earthly mythology, with emphasis on the Norse and Greek. It is not uncommon to encounter Gorgons, Lamias, Centaurs, Trolls, Ogres, Dragons, Pegasi, etc., etc., but it is quite rare to meet a Chon Chon (flying head from Peruvian mythology) or a Djinni (though it has happened). But the most fearful monsters in the world are the Dragons and the Balrogs.

Dragons have always been the archtype of mythological power. For a fantasy game to ignore the draconic in its construction would be unthinkable, but because they are so well known, there is no need to discuss them here.

More fascinating are the Balrogs, an original creation with Tolkien, and the one that has always fascinated me most. Balrogs, as everyone should know, are a sort of super flame demon, associated with dark shadows and blazing flames. Not entirely solitary, Balrogs often seize positions of leadership among Orcs and Trolls, and have been known to command Dragons. Their preferred weapon is a many-thonged whip of flame, though they will also use flaming swords, axes, maces, etc. Inherently sorcerous and with great knowledge of the dark arts, Balrogs could become the mightiest of wizardfolk if they didn't despise everything but raw power. It is hard to adequately describe the awesomeness of the Balrog – when one appeared in Tolkien, it always seemed to be obscured by smoke and flame and shadow, but one thing I know – Bakshi's Balrog from the *Lord of the Rings* cartoon was inadequate and misleading. When I want to frighten my players or pit them



SOURCEBOOK REVIEW

CULTS OF PRAX

By Richard L. Snider

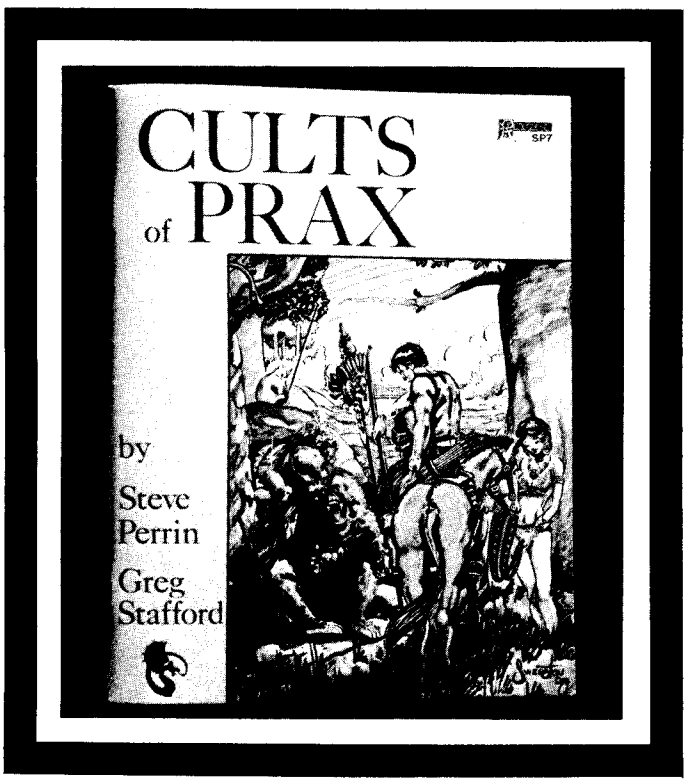
Cults of Prax, authored by Steve Perrin and Greg Stafford, is a supplement to Chaosium's *RuneQuest* system. At the outset I must fess up to the fact that I am not overly familiar with the *RQ* system and so this review will be solely on this sourcebook.

Cults of Prax contains 15 cults divided into four general categories of relationship to the histories of the human and non-human races of Prax. The categories: the Barbarian Gods, the Invader Gods, the Lightbringers, and the Non-Human Gods, fit together well in a cosmologic and historical hierarchy upon which this supplement bases some fine narrative. Each class of god is presented with a fine introduction of their place in the cosmologic time line. In the subsequent section on each god the individual place of each deity is sketched in general detail.

The authors deserve high praise for the organizational system that they devised for this supplement. The general sample cult outline that was presented before it, and was actually used in the descriptions of the cults, is exemplary. The idea of placing this general form in front of the meat of the supplement was a very good idea which was carried out very well by the authors and editor.

The actual outlines that follow the sample are quite well prepared. They present all the data on that deity and the ranks of followers in a logical and systematic format. I have yet to see any book of the genre that has succeeded in presenting such a clean and logical format from cover to cover, some companies don't even try to do so.

The cosmology presented in the book is a good step towards adding a sorely needed dimension to fantasy gaming. The existence of a fantasy world without organized social guidelines and a delineated hierarchy is a sadly incomplete construct. I applaud Chaosium and the authors for realizing this and producing this fine effort to rectify this general omission in the hobby. I am sure that the cosmological section provided for Prax will reach even greater focus and depth when we are able to view it in the light of the Glorantha whole that is said to be in preparation. The section of the cosmology that is presented here as the *Cults of Prax* is written in a thoughtful and enjoyable manner that sheds considerable light on the deities and the affairs of deity and cultists.



Another novel concept used in this book is the inclusion of a narrative example of cult interaction throughout the text of the supplement. This work, "The Journal of Biturian Varosh," is a fine narrative which shows itself to be the work of an author, or authors, with a good degree of talent for prose. I would encourage them to continue efforts of this type and quality.

Beyond the entertainment value of the journal, which was not meager, the purpose of its inclusion is to instruct the reader, by example, in the interaction between cults. Biturian V-rosh is a merchant priest of the Issarian cult. In segments throughout the course of the supplement he encounters every cult that is to be found in the supplement. The author's utilization of this technique succeeds admirably as both an example and good quality entertainment. It is definitely an attention grabber.

Chaosium is generally known for its graphic quality and this supplement is no exception. The artwork was of a consistent quality throughout and was showcased well by the editors.

I cannot say that I enjoyed the small poetry sections contained within. To my taste the majority of these poems, presented as funerary chants and Orlanth challenges, were somewhat amateurish and trite. Especially so was the funerary chant of the cult of Daka Fal, the barbarian god of Death. These poems are a very minor part of the work. In fact, I really only included my review of them because I hate reviews that are totally positive and I couldn't find much else in this work that deserves criticism.

In summation, *Cults of Prax* is the best extant cosmology designed for use with any FRP that has been published. The format is presented in a professional, enjoyable and highly organized manner. I heartily recommend it both to those persons who own a copy of *RQ* and others who are interested in adding this dimension to their individual campaigns.

I view the addition of social interaction mechanisms and a delineated cosmology to be integral to a complete fantasy campaign. *Cult of Prax* is the only published sourcebook of this type that gives these factors anywhere near their proper weight. I applaud both authors and the editors for their fine product.

Cults of Prax is available from Chaosium, Inc., PO Box 6302, Albany, CA 94706, for $11.95 postpaid. Calif. residents add appropriate 6% or 6½% sales tax.

GLORANTHAN BIRTHDAY TABLES

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It is often necessary to know the date of a character's birth in role-playing games; this is especially true of games in which there is some form of social system for the player-character and some form of of monies to be gained from high social standing. The various nobles in *RuneQuest* are one such group of player-characters who stand to gain monthly or annual amounts of money based on their birthdays. The following is a table designed to allow the players and Game Masters to generate birthdays for characters within the *RQ* game system, and to allow for a few of the exotic types of player-characters to exist. Since the Gloranthan calendar divides dates into year, season, week, and day, roll for each of the latter three (the year will be set by the GM according to the pre-determined age of the character when he or she entered the campaign).

If a character was born in the Sacred Time, the normal roll for the week does not apply. Roll 1D8, and 1-4 means first week and 5-8 means second week of the Sacred Time. In addition, there is a possibility that a character born in this period has been touched by the gods, for good or ill. They should roll on the Sacred Time Birth Table.

The use of the tables is pretty straightforward. The rationale behind the Sacred Time rolls is based on the idea of the gods playing a part in the making of Heroes. Unfortunately, chaos also leaks into a few births. Thus, you find the various lycanthropes and ogres appearing in children of normal parents.

These tables will help the GM establish the birthdate of characters. They will allow the GM to locate in time, as well as in space, the area that the various nobles must journey to in order to pick up their income. This system also allows the GM to introduce a limited number of lycanthropes as player-characters, and the very human-appearing ogres as part of a party. Finally, the tables allow a further detail to round out the character in the mind of the player. For example, a character born on a holy day for a particular god or goddess may be influenced to join that cult instead of another.



SACRED TIME BIRTH TABLE

D20	*Result*
01	Blessed by the gods. Make one roll on the Chaotic Features Table in *RQ* (reroll a "99-00" only once–you get only one feature). This is a gift of the gods, and is without the taint of chaos.
02-19	Not touched by the gods, no effect.
20	Cursed by the gods. Roll on the following:

D6	*Result*
1	Character is a bearwalker.
2	Character is a tigerson.
3	Character is a tuskbrother.
4	Character is a wolfbrother.
5	Character is an ogre.
6	Race unaffected, but roll on the Chaotic Features Table in *RQ*, and the character does have the taint of chaos.

GLORANTHAN BIRTHDAY TABLES

SEASON TABLE

D100	*Season*
01-05	Sacred Time
06-24	Sea Season
25-43	Fire Season
44-62	Earth Season
63-81	Dark Season
82-00	Storm Season

WEEK TABLE

D8	*Week*
1	Disorder Week
2	Harmony Week
3	Death Week
4	Fertility Week
5	Stasis Week
6	Movement Week
7	Illusion Week
8	Truth Week

DAY TABLE

D8	*Day*
1	Freezeday
2	Waterday
3	Clayday
4	Windsday
5	Fireday
6	Wildday
7	Godsday
8	Reroll

GLORANTHA RUNE CALENDAR and RQ TRAINING RECORD SHEET

YEAR_____ CAMPAIGN_____ PLAYER_____ CHARACTER_____

	LUNAR PHASES	Crescent	Dying	Black	Crescent	Empty Half	Full Moon	Full Half
	DAY NAMES	FREEZEDAY	WATERDAY	CLAYDAY	WINDSDAY	FIREDAY	WILDDAY	GODSDAY
SEA SEASON	Disorder							
	Harmony							
	Death							
	Fertility							
	Stasis							
	Movement							
	Illusion							
	Truth							
FIRE SEASON	Disorder							
	Harmony							
	Death							
	Fertility							
	Stasis							
	Movement							
	Illusion							
	Truth							
EARTH SEASON	Disorder							
	Harmony							
	Death							
	Fertility							
	Stasis							
	Movement							
	Illusion							
	Truth							
DARK SEASON	Disorder							
	Harmony							
	Death							
	Fertility							
	Stasis							
	Movement							
	Illusion							
	Truth							
STORM SEASON	Disorder							
	Harmony							
	Death							
	Fertility							
	Stasis							
	Movement							
	Illusion							
	Truth							
	The SACRED TIME							

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By Greg Stafford

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Vardy Combat System

Part 2

By John T. Sapienza, Jr.

This is a variant of the *Dungeons & Dragons* combat system, parts of which appeared in substantially different form in various issues of *Alarums & Excursions* and *The Wild Hunt*. The system is copyright © 1980 by the author, and is divided into three sections: The Basic System is simple enough for beginners and fast enough to satisfy experienced players. The Expanded System consists of optional rules modules to add extra realism and more interesting "feel" to combat. The D20 variant is for those prefer to stay with a D20 system instead of shifting to using D100.

The Vardy Combat System is being presented in two parts because of its length. Part 1, which was published in *Different Worlds 6*, contains the Basic System plus the first group of the Expanded System's optional modules, including weapons vs. armor adjustments, adjustments for unusual strength or dexterity, adjustments to range of thrown or missile weapons, limits on missile weapon usage, critical hits and fumbles with weapons, a weapon expertise system, and a weapons list. We begin this part with a concept that greatly adds to the involvement of the players in combat, treating parries as an active part of the game.

EXPANDED SYSTEM (continued)

WEAPON OR SHIELD PARRIES. The *D&D* rules contain no means of reasonably simulating the use of weapons or shields to parry blows. In either case, the existing rules simply give the character a +1 on armor class for the use of a main gauche or shield in defense. It seems to me that combat would be more interesting if parrying were treated as a skill in *D&D*, as it is in *RuneQuest*. And the simulation of reality would be improved, because it has been my observation that, at least in Society for Creative Anachronism combat, the shield is a far more significant factor in your defense than *D&D*'s flat 5% (+1). This is because the shield is mobile armor, and is an inherently flexible defense requiring skill to use, unlike body armor protection.

I propose taking the shield out of the armor system, and adding parrying to the combat system. *D&D* combat would be changed from a one-action to a two-action system, giving the character the option of using each hand in either an attack or a parry every melee round. Normally, characters fight with weapon and shield, and the usual choice will be to attack with the weapon and parry with the shield. However, you can elect to parry with both against a monster that seems to be raining down blows on you, giving you the chance to block two incoming blows instead of one as you try to figure how to get out of there. A character fighting with two weapons can choose between two attacks, an attack and a parry, or two parries, and so can a character fighting with a double-handed weapon. But the shield will remain the fighter's best friend because while you can parry weapon attacks with weapon or shield, only a shield can parry against incoming missiles.

Parrying skill would depend upon character class and level. Fighters would go up +3% per level achieved above the first, clerics and thieves +2%, and mages +1%, all beginning with a base parry chance of 10%. Unlike the attack tables, in the Parry Table you try to roll D100 equal or below the number shown in order to succeed in parrying the blow, thus preventing it from hitting the character. You only roll to parry when an opponent has rolled a hit on the character. The figures in the Parry Table could be modified according to the character's dexterity, using the Parry Modifications for Dexterity Table. Note that a character with a minus on parrying skill due to low dexterity cannot be reduced to below zero, but cannot parry at all until he or she has risen to a sufficiently high level to overcome the initial dexterity handicap.

It is still possible to retain the different sizes for shields used in Part 1 of the system. The figures given in the Parry Table would be for use with the medium shield, and you would adjust those figures as follows. The adjustments reflect the relative weight of the different sizes of shield and the strength necessary to use them effectively:

	Strength					
Shield	*03-05*	*06-08*	*09-12*	*13-15*	*16-18*	*19+*
Small	- 5%	- 5%	- 5%	- 5%	+0	+5%
Medium	NA	+0	+0	+0	+5%	+10%
Large	NA	NA	+0	+5%	+10%	+15%

"NA" means that a person of that low strength cannot use that size shield effectively at all, while "+0" means no adjustment to the figure given in the Parry Table percentage. The - 5% for use of the small shield merely reflects its smaller coverage as compared with the medium shield, just as the pluses for the large shield reflect its larger coverage in comparison with the medium shield.

Use of a parry skill system requires removal of the shield from the armor table, and a revaluation of each type of armor. Since the numbers will be different for each variety of armor,

FIGHTER ATTACK TABLE

Level

AT	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*
9	40	36	32	28	24	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
8	45	41	37	33	29	25	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
7	50	46	42	38	34	30	26	22	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
6	55	51	47	43	39	35	31	27	23	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
5	60	56	52	48	44	40	36	32	28	24	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
4	65	61	57	53	49	45	41	37	33	29	25	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
3	70	66	62	58	54	50	46	42	38	34	30	26	22	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
2	75	71	67	63	59	55	51	47	43	39	35	31	27	23	20	20	20	20	20	20
1	80	76	72	68	64	60	56	52	48	44	40	36	32	28	24	20	20	20	20	20
0	85	81	77	73	69	65	61	57	53	49	45	41	37	33	29	25	21	20	20	20
-1	90	86	82	78	74	70	66	62	58	54	50	46	42	38	34	30	26	22	20	20
-2	95	91	87	83	79	75	71	67	63	59	55	51	47	43	39	35	31	27	23	20
-3	100	96	92	88	84	80	76	72	68	64	60	56	52	48	44	40	36	32	28	24
-4	105	101	97	93	89	85	81	77	73	69	65	61	57	53	49	45	41	37	33	29
-5	110	106	102	98	94	90	86	82	78	74	70	66	62	58	54	50	46	42	38	34

CLERIC AND THIEF ATTACK TABLE

Level

AT	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*
9	40	37	34	31	28	25	22	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
8	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
7	50	47	44	41	38	35	32	29	26	23	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
6	55	52	49	46	43	40	37	34	31	28	25	22	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
5	60	57	54	51	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	20	20	20	20	20	20
4	65	62	59	56	53	50	47	44	41	38	35	32	29	26	23	20	20	20	20	20
3	70	67	64	61	58	55	52	49	46	43	40	37	34	31	28	25	22	20	20	20
2	75	72	69	66	63	60	57	54	51	48	45	42	39	36	33	30	27	24	21	20
1	80	77	74	71	68	65	62	59	56	53	50	47	44	41	38	35	32	29	26	23
0	85	82	79	76	73	70	67	64	61	58	55	52	49	46	43	40	37	34	31	28
-1	90	87	84	81	78	75	72	69	66	63	60	57	54	51	48	45	42	39	36	33
-2	95	92	89	86	83	80	77	74	71	68	65	62	59	56	53	50	47	44	41	38
-3	100	97	94	91	88	85	82	79	76	73	70	67	64	61	58	55	52	49	46	43
-4	105	102	99	96	93	90	87	84	81	78	75	72	69	66	63	60	57	54	51	48
-5	110	107	104	101	98	95	92	89	86	83	80	77	74	71	68	65	62	59	56	53

MAGIC USER ATTACK TABLE

Level

AT	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*
9	40	38	36	34	32	30	28	26	24	22	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20

PARRY TABLE

Level	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*
Fighter	10%	13%	16%	19%	22%	25%	28%	31%	34%	37%	40%	43%	46%	49%	52%	55%	58%	61%	64%	67%
Clrc/Thf	10%	12%	14%	16%	18%	20%	22%	24%	26%	28%	30%	32%	34%	36%	38%	40%	42%	44%	46%	48%
Mage	10%	11%	12%	13%	14%	15%	16%	17%	18%	19%	20%	21%	22%	23%	24%	25%	26%	27%	28%	29%

PARRY MODIFICATIONS FOR DEXTERITY

Dexterity with Minus	*8*	*7*	*6*	*5*	*4*	*3*	*2*	*1*	*0*	*-1*
Dexteirty with Bonus	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*
Parry Modification	2%	4%	6%	8%	10%	12%	14%	16%	18%	20%

to avoid confusion let's not call them armor classes (AC) in the parry system, but armor types (AT). And since the shield occupied a space between each kind of armor in the *D&D* table, let's fill in those spaces with new intermediate types of armor. As compared with ACs, the to-hit number for all armor has been reduced by 10% across the board, with the following names and designations:

AT 9	Clothing	AT 6	Cuirboilli	AT 3	Full Plate
AT 8	Padding	AT 5	Chainmail	AT 2	Riding Plate
AT 7	Leather	AT 4	Half Plate		

The change in armor value in the parrying system requires a new set of attack tables. Remember that attacks against monsters in these tables read as if against AC numbers, which simplifies conversion and is why I kept the same numbers for AT as for AC. I suggest having all monsters use attack tables that most resemble the monsters' equivalent character class – mages as mages, etc., and in case of doubt as fighters.

A superficial look at these tables makes it appear that the character is much easier to hit under this system, but this is not the case. Remember that the character can parry with shield or weapon (including the mage's dagger). The comparison of Combat Systems Charts is a comparison of three systems, one using the Alternative Combat System from *D&D* but regularized to +2 per combat class, another using combat classes with parries, and the third using my D100 system. What I wanted to find out was how long it would take in melee

COMPARISON OF COMBAT SYSTEMS CHART

Alternative Combat System

Level	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*
Hit %	20	20	20	30	30	30	40	40	40	50	50	50
Average Damage	0.90	0.90	0.90	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.80	1.80	1.80	2.25	2.25	2.25
Hit Points	4.5	9.0	13.5	18.0	22.5	27.0	31.5	36.0	40.5	45.0	49.5	54.0
Rounds to Kill	5	10	15	14	17	20	18	20	23	20	22	24

Combat Classes with Parries

Level	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*
Hit %	30	30	30	40	40	40	50	50	50	60	60	60
Parry %	20	20	20	25	25	25	30	30	30	35	35	35
Net Hit %	24	24	24	30	30	30	35	35	35	39	39	39
Average Damage	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.35	1.35	1.35	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.76	1.76	1.76
Hit Points	4.5	9.0	13.5	18.0	22.5	27.0	31.5	36.0	40.5	45.0	49.5	54.0
Rounds to Kill	5	9	13	14	17	20	20	23	26	25	29	31

Percentage Combat System

Level	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*
Hit %	30	34	38	42	46	50	54	58	62	66	70	74
Parry %	10	13	16	19	22	25	28	31	34	37	40	43
Net Hit %	27.0	29.6	31.9	34.0	35.9	37.5	38.9	40.0	40.9	41.6	42.0	42.2
Average Damage	1.22	1.33	1.44	1.53	1.62	1.69	1.75	1.80	1.84	1.87	1.89	1.90
Hit Points	4.5	9.0	13.5	18.0	22.5	27.0	31.5	36.0	40.5	45.0	49.5	54.0
Rounds to Kill	4	7	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	27	29

rounds to kill an opponent in plate and shield with a D8 longsword. The comparison assumes two fighters of the same level, with no magic armor or weapons and no pluses to hit than those from level/combat class, using D8 hit dice per level. The figures for average damage per round are derived by multiplying 4.5, the average damage on a hit by a D8 weapon, by the net hit odds. This was then divided into the hit points to get the number of rounds, on average, required to kill.

You might think that introducing a defense-by-level system would greatly increase the advantage that high levels have over low levels already due to their higher hit odds and higher hit points, but the difference is surprisingly slight. For example, a fight between a L4 and a L7 in the first table gives the L7 ten rounds to kill the L4, and L4 24 rounds to kill the L7. In the third table the figures are eleven and 21, a difference but not a dramatic one.

The increase per level in defensive capacity through increasing parrying skill in this system has had a traditional equivalent in *D&D* of allowing characters to acquire magical armor as they progress through life, adding the equivalent of new layers of armor through magical armor pluses. Gamemasters who adopt the parrying system are cautioned to give out much less magical armor protection, as the combination will tend to make characters too close to invulnerable for comfort. Note that what magical armor is available would continue to behave as it does now, moving the character down the to-hit table the number of lines that the armor has pluses. Magical shields, however, should be converted from behaving like pieces of magical armor to affecting the character's ability to parry, at the rate of +5% for every +1 on the shield. Remember also that weapons can be given this power, too, and this would be particularly appropriate with double-handed weapons which, as they must be used without a shield, must be used to parry if there is to be a parry at all. Rings, cloaks, and other items of magical protection could also be treated as affecting parrying ability, but they also could be considered to affect AT – remember to specify.

There are limits that can be applied to the character's effectiveness in parrying. One is position. If you use lead figures to determine the location of all characters (and you should, it eliminates a lot of arguments), you can use something like Dave Hargrave's system from the first volume of the *Arduin Grimoire*, in which directions are given on where you can protect with a parry and where you cannot. You can do it on a tabletop, but it's easier on a hexboard or a checkerboard, or an alternating square battleboard such as the one I use.

Another method is breakage. There should always be a possibility of a weapon or shield breaking when it is hit while parrying, even if you don't want to bother with weapons breaking when they hit an opponent. Any weapon making a successful parry against a hard hit would break if the opponent's successful attack roll was followed by a second successful to-hit roll, while to break a shield would require a roll of 96-00 followed by a successful to-hit roll (a critical hit), since shields are much harder to break. A magical weapon or shield gets a save against breaking of 5% for every plus and every ability enchanted into it. Magical equipment can be repaired by a master smith, but the repair must be re-enchanted using the Enchant an Object spell for the repair to be complete. Otherwise, a weapon or shield will be down one point from its former plus to hit (or parry). Magic gear that has been brought down to +0 goes no farther down, but begins to lose any abilities it has at the rate of one per break (roll randomly to determine which one goes). But a magic weapon that has been reduced to +0 and no abilities remains valuable, since it would continue to be able to hit enchanted monsters that are immune to normal weapons.

HIT POINTS. One of the things that keeps this combat system a *D&D* variant instead of changing it completely to a different game is that its factors are still keyed to the level concept for degree of skills attained. A part of the level system is the idea that a character's defences against attack, both physical and magical, increase as the character ascends to higher levels, and this is measured in hit points, which in turn govern the character's ability to function after being damaged. As long as the character doesn't run out of hit points, the character can still function. The hit points possible are governed by the character class selected for the character, with the fighter having the highest possible number, presumably representing vitality arising from lots of exercise. The cleric gets the next highest, again presumably because the cleric spends at least part of the time in physical training for combat. The thief and mage get the least possible hit points, indicating that they are less charged with physical vigor through lack of intense physical training. Or at least that seems a reasonable theory; the rules don't give reasons, only specify hit dice per level of D8, D6, and D4, respectively.

On average, this means that a fighter should get 4.5 hit points per level, a cleric 3.5 hit points, and a thief or mage 2.5 hit points. But anyone who has played a large number of characters knows that the average is merely that, and the one-die-per-level approach produces mages at L5 with 20 hit points and fighters at L5 with five hit points, depending on the luck of the die rolls. It seems to me that this is a highly peculiar result, even a perversion of the intended roles to be played in each of the character classes when this kind of situation can

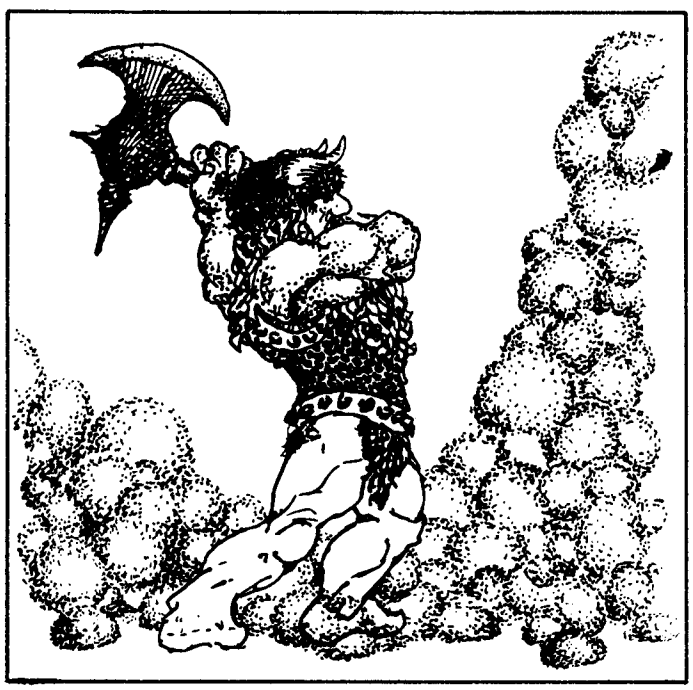


occur. That is, by definition a fighter should be more able to sustain injury in combat than a mage, since the former is supposed to represent a vigorous physical specimen while the latter is supposed to be a flabby bookworm. I exaggerate, but you can see my point – the hit point system contains the potential of distorting the theoretical roles it is supposed to simulate because, while it varies the maximum results of each roll, it does not vary the minimum result, which is one hit point for every character class.

I suggest changing the hit dice per level arrangement for the four basic character classes from using three different dice sizes to using one die size with points added: D4 for mages, D4 +1 for thieves, D4+2 for clerics, and D4+3 for fighters. This gives a guaranteed spread of one point between the classes, one, two, three, and four points minimum, respectively, on the bottom, with four, five, six, and seven points maximum, respectively, on the top. It also means an average of 2.5, 3.5, 4.5, and 5.5 hit points per level, respectively. And while it means that it is no longer possible for a fighter to get eight points when going up a level, it also means no danger of getting only one, either, and in fact the average points will be a bit higher under this system than before for everyone but mages. Thieves have been promoted a bit as compared with mages because thieves fight more than mages do. This system treats thieves somewhat along the same lines as in the *Advanced D&D* rules in this respect, but is a better system because of its minimum points limits. However, if you feel you must have high hit point maximums for fighters under the *AD&D* rules, then in place of D4, D6, D8, and D10, I recommend using a D4, D4 +2, D4+4, D4+6 series, instead.

Low level characters can be dull to play when their low hit points make them run away from fights, knowing that one sword blow can kill. I suggest livening things up by a special rule for low level characters: hit points equal Constitution until points rolled as you go up levels exceed Constitution. Remember to do the same for monsters, of course.

EXPERIENCE POINTS. One of the curious irregularities in the original *D&D* rules is that the EP required per level does not appear to have been done by comparing what was required for a given level in each character class. The result is that you have such oddities as mages reaching level seven faster than fighters, although mages have a higher rate of EP increase at first than fighters. Or that clerics at high levels need only 100k per level while thieves need 125k per level, although clerics have a higher rate of EP increase at first than thieves. Or that clerics reach combat class 5 and 6 before fighters, although clerics go up to higher combat classes every four levels while fighters only need three levels to advance. In addition, you have the strange situation that while high EP requirements are designed to represent slower progress to higher levels commensurate with the higher power of certain classes, notably mages, the cleric (which is a form of spelluser, but without the mage's limit on weapons and armor) requires less EP per level than the fighter, who is denied the use of magic and is in that respect less powerful than the cleric (particularly under the system used in my article in *DW 3*). Also puzzling is the charging of low EP to the thief, who although limited in combat protection is given special combat abilities (especially the strike from behind power), plus the use of magic scrolls at high levels, a power denied even to the lowly fighter.



I therefore recommend a major revision of the EP scales for the four main character classes, to provide for even spacing between the classes, thus eliminating the present crossing of the scales at various levels. And I suggest that the EP charged each class be adjusted to better reflect the relative powers of the classes. This would mean reversing the scales for fighter and cleric, moving the cleric between fighter and mage as a mixed class. And it would mean moving the thief up to the same scale as the fighter, but with combat progression every four levels, thus insuring that the thief will not advance much faster than the cleric in combat skills.

Level	*Fighter/Thief*	*Cleric*	*Mage*
2	1.5k	2k	2.5k
3	3k	4k	5k
4	6k	8k	10k
5	12k	16k	20k
6	25k	32k	40k
7	50k	63k	75k
8	100k	125k	150k
9	200k	250k	300k
10	300k	375k	450k
+1	+100k	+125k	+150k

The relatively low increments for high levels are premised on the GM awarding EP at a rate lower than the inflated amounts required under the present tables. This is the only real control over advancement, since what counts is not so much the numbers on the tables as the rate at which the GM awards EP to the characters.

CHARACTER CLASS DIFFERENCES in weapons and armor permitted are not explained at all in the original *D&D* rules. It is clear that the differences in what each class was permitted to use were written with the intention of providing some balance between the powers of each class. Yet the lack of a rationale for each set of rules makes it difficult to understand and provide logical extensions within each class, particularly for subclasses developed later. With this in mind, I have some suggested rules changes based on specific rationales that may prove more satisfactory to anyone who is not content with the rules as they now stand.

Fighters are heavy infantry. They spent their entire prior experience period (when they were still "zero level" people, before they entered the campaign) training in the use of heavy armor, for which they went through body-building exercises to

toughen the body sufficiently to fight effectively in plate armor, and weapons exercises in order to become proficient with certain weapons (up to "first level" skill) while wearing that armor. In addition, social custom permits only the fighter to wear plate armor as a sign of status, this due in part to the rarity of smiths skilled enough to make plate armor in sufficient quantity. Therefore, only fighters can wear plate armor. They can choose to learn to use any hand weapon, and normally learn to use single-handed weapons with shield for maximum protection, but may elect to use double-handed to two weapon combat. The only weapons limit they have is on thrown and missile weapons. They are limited to the crossbow as a missile weapon because plate armor is too restrictive to use bow or sling. Similarly, it is difficult to throw weapons in plate armor, and with these weapons fighters attack at -15% (-3). The fighter is thus forced to choose between maximum protection and the use of better long range weapons, and most choose to wear plate and shield instead of lighter armor in order to best serve in their function as front line infantry.

Clerics are light infantry. They spent their entire prior experience splitting their training between their clerical magic skill (usually their first cure spell plus their initial power against the undead) and combat skills. They are not expected to be front line fighters, are not trained in the use of plate armor, and are not provided with plate armor. Instead, they train in chainmail and shield, and are expected to act as second line combat reserves for the fighters. In this capacity, they may use any weapon, including the bow, crossbow, or sling; they are not limited to using only blunt weapons. This rebalance of the class, trading 10% of armor protection in exchange for permitting them to use any weapon, was adopted because the old rule requiring blunted weapons in order to do less damage than the fighters' weapons no longer makes sense under the revised EP system. The new system requires higher EP per level than for fighters, thus making the clerics' progress in combat skills even slower relative to the fighters than under the original *D&D* rules (as a compensation for their other powers, although most of the difference is in the faster promotion for fighters than a slowdown for clerics). And this lower level of fighting skill, plus the armor limit, justifies allowing them the use of any weapon, particularly the sword, which is also used by thieves and druids.

Thieves are skirmishers. They are not particularly combat-oriented, and are not expected to fight head-on in melee, like fighters or clerics. Thieves are scouts, and prefer to remain unobtrusive, so they shun heavy (and noisy) metal armor, or even cuirboilli with its greater weight and stiffness, in favor of quiet, non-reflective leather. They generally do not use shields, which are too bulky to allow for silent movement and hiding in shadows. This does not mean that thieves are unable to use shields in a pinch, but they won't enter a building with one while scouting, because they don't expect to stand and fight and thus the shield is an unnecessary burden. Thieves prefer light weapons, and often learn to fight with longsword and parrying dagger. They tend to use sling or shortbow, preferring the former if they usually spend their time in towns or underground because it can be pocketed and carried unobtrusively, or preferring the latter if they usually spend their time in the wilderness, where the extra bulk of a bow and a small quiver with 20 arrows is small bother, and the sight of it is unlikely to cause comment among those the thief encounters.

Mages are not fighters of any description, except in desperation. They are intellectuals who spent their entire prior experience period learning reading, writing, and arcane matters. The only weapon they carry is the dagger, which is the universal eating tool and personal protection weapon, in which they receive their only combat training at the academies. Mages do not use other weapons because they never learned how, and for the same reason they do not use shields or heavy armor. They distain light armor because they know they can protect themselves better with a protection spell than leather armor can. (The training rationale is probably the most useful one. I don't like the metal-inhibits-magic rationale because it raises questions of why magic thrown at metal works, and why clerics are unaffected even though they share a number of magic spells pertaining to detection and communication with the mage. In fact, I consider the cleric a specialized variety of mage, a master of magic pertaining to life and death, not only in the cure spells but those pertaining to the undead, either creating them, controlling them, repelling them, or destroying them, and so I am very cautious with rules affecting either class for their effect on the other. The reason clerics go in for weapons and armor training is that they lack that which gives the mage the most noticeable power, the mass damage spells.)



D20 COMBAT VARIANT

Although the D100 system permits greater flexibility in fine tuning distinctions between character classes, I realize that some people will prefer to stick with a D20 combat class system such as the one in the *D&D* rules. This does have the advantage of simplicity, since it is easier to make adjustments of +1 or +2 then +4% or +11% mentally, and rapid calculations can be made in such a system for quick adjustment of factors by most people. Does this mean that I suggest sticking with the *D&D* rules as they now exist? No; there is still room for improvement.

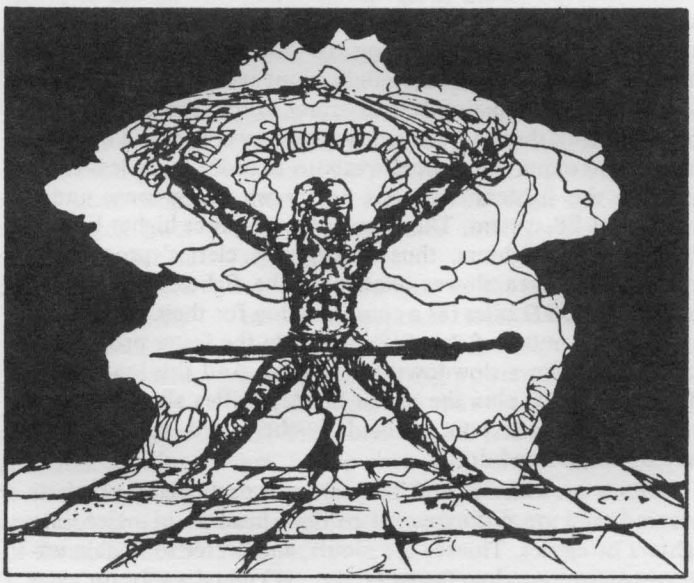
The fact remains that the fighter lacks a gain per level in the skills that distinguish the class from other classes under the existing system in the *D&D* rules. While the present attack table is somewhat irregular, it is fair to say that in general characters gain +2 to hit when they go up to a higher combat class. In particular, fighters gain +2 for every three levels, clerics and thieves +2 for every four levels, and mages +2 for every five levels. It doesn't have to be so long a wait, however.

If the combat classes were split into increments of +1 instead of +2, you could get a gain every few levels instead of having to wait a long time for a bigger increase in skill. Clerics and thieves are easy to handle this way, since their +2 per four levels divides neatly into +1 per two levels. But what about fighters and mages? You can't divide a level in half, after all. You don't have to, all that is required is the mental flexibility to divide the present combat class level groups into irregular, but regularly recurring, groups of levels. Thus, for a fighter combat class 0 (no plus to hit) would be the first level, combat class 1 (meaning +1 to hit) would be the next two levels level, combat class 2 (+2 to hit) would be the next level, and so forth. This isn't as neatly split as would be possible under a D100 system, but it's far more satisfactory than before. The combat class groups of levels under this revision would be as in the D20 Combat Table.

I suggest that you apply a system like that in the D100 system, under which a natural roll of "01" on the D20 attack roll is always a miss regardless of combat class and other factors, while a roll of "20" is always a hit regardless of the defender's armor.

One advantage of the combat class system is that you don't need an attack table for every character class, as in the D100 system. Instead, you have the Armor Number Table, a simple table that applies to everyone, giving what it takes to hit each Armor Class at first level. The combat class number would be a plus to hit added to the amount rolled for the attack, just like a plus to hit from a magic sword or one coming from high strength or dexterity (thus making it possible to get attack rolls higher than 20 on a D20), which is easy mental addition.

In fact, under this system it is possible to eliminate the Armor Class number system entirely. You would refer to your armor by its Armor Number: Clothing 10, Padding 11, Leather 12, Cuirboilli 13, Chainmail 14, Half Plate 15, Full Plate 16, Riding Plate 17. Chainmail would be simply "Armor 14." If you are using weapons vs. armor modifications, you would identify your armor by its nature and its effective to-hit number. Thus, for example, a character in chainmail +3 and a ring of +1 protection, without a shield, would be wearing "chainmail 18," and the number stated would be modified up or down by the GM in computing what was needed to hit that kind of armor with a given type of weapon. This is a more rational system, since its numbers are directly related to combat function, and its pluses and minuses are actually added or subtracted (respectively) to or from the Armor Number, unlike the Armor Class system (in which a plus is actually subtracted from the Armor Class number, and a minus is actually added to the Armor Class number). Shields would be handled exactly as in the D100 system, with each +5% changed to +1.



D20 COMBAT TABLE

	Combat Class										
	0	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*
Fighter	01	02-03	04	05-06	07	08-09	10	11-12	13	14-15	16
Cleric/Thief	01-02	03-04	05-06	07-08	09-10	11-12	13-14	15-16	17-18	19-20	21-22
Mage	01-03	04-05	06-08	09-10	11-13	14-15	16-18	19-20	21-23	24-25	26-28

ARMOR NUMBER TABLE

Armor Class	*09*	*08*	*07*	*06*	*05*	*04*	*03*	*02*	*01*	*00*	*-1*	*-2*	*-3*	*-4*	*-5*
Armor Number	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

EXPANDED D20 SYSTEM

A number of the modules of the expanded D100 system can be used directly in the D20 system: Weapon vs. Armor Adjustments, Weapons Table, Adjustments to Range, Weapon Expertise, Hit Points, and Experience Points. Others require a separate discussion.

ADJUSTMENTS FOR STRENGTH OR DEXTERITY. These tables parallel those of the D100 system, of course, but they are less apparently helpful than those of the other system. The reason is that these tables are in fixed 5% increments, and thus where the D100 system allows small pluses at closer-to-average strength or dexterity this simply isn't possible in the D20 system. The result is that a character needs to be farther away from normal (09-12) before any adjustments show up on these tables. Remember that the beginning pluses in the D100 system are really quite small, and don't let it bother you.

The Combat Modifications for Strength table does not apply to missile weapons (bow, crossbow, sling) since the weapon supplies the force that sends the missile, not the user's strength.

This system is based on the theory that dexterity is more important than strength in landing a hit, while strength is more important than dexterity in doing damage, but both are relevant to each category.

WEAPON OR SHIELD PARRIES. Parrying can be added to the D20 system, too. If a character is hit by an opponent against whom a parry is possible, the player would roll a D20 to see whether the parry attempt succeeded. Base parry roll for fighters would be "01-04," for clerics or thieves "01-03," and for mages "01-02." (GMs using the four-step separation of the classes would have fighters parry on a base of "01-05," clerics "01-04," thieves "01-03," and mages "01-02.") For every even-numbered combat class achieved above zero, the character would increase the base parry range by +1: Combat classes 2, 4, 6, etc. Parry system Armor Numbers are: Clothing 8, Padding 9, Leather 10, Cuirboilli 11, Chainmail 12, Half Plate 13, Full Plate 14, Riding Plate 15. Other modifications in the D100 system for different shield sizes translate to + or – in the D20 system.

CRITICAL HITS AND FUMBLES. A critical hit occurs on an attack roll of a natural "20" followed by a second D20 roll sufficient to hit. Damage done is that for the weapon, plus a bonus determined by a D6 roll: 1-3 +1D6; 4-5 +2D6; 6 +3D6 damage. A fumble occurs on an attack roll of a natural "1" followed by a failure to roll equal or below the character's dexterity on a second D20 roll. The result is the character being unable to attack or parry for the number of melee rounds determined by a D6 roll: 1-3 one melee round; 4-5 two rounds; 6 three rounds. The other notes in the D100 system apply equally to the D20 system.

FINAL WORD

Many of the ideas in this article first saw the light of day in my columns in *Alarums & Excursions* and *The Wild Hunt*. My special thanks go to Robert Ellis for the use of his hit point system and to Daniel L. Pierson for the use of his weapons expertise system.



COMBAT MODIFICATIONS FOR STRENGTH

Strength with Minus	*8*	*7*	*6*	*5*	*4*	*3*	*2*	*1*	*0*	*- 1*	*Monster Strength*						
Strength with Bonus	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*	*23*	*24*	*25*	*26*	*27*	*28*	*29*
To-Hit Factor	–	–	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4
Damage Points	1	1	D2	D2	D3	D3	D4	D4	D5	D6	2D4	2D6	3D6	4D6	5D6	6D6	7D6

COMBAT MODIFICATIONS FOR DEXTERITY

Dexterity with Minus	*8*	*7*	*6*	*5*	*4*	*3*	*2*	*1*	*0*	*- 1*	*Monster Dexterity*						
Dexterity with Bonus	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*	*23*	*24*	*25*	*26*	*27*	*28*	*29*
To-Hit Factor	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	5	5	6	6	7	7
Damage Points	–	–	–	1	1	1	D2	D2	D3	D3	D4	D4	D5	D6	2D4	2D6	3D6

PARRY MODIFICATIONS FOR DEXTERITY

Dexterity with Minus	*8*	*7*	*6*	*5*	*4*	*3*	*2*	*1*	*0*	*- 1*
Dexterity with Bonus	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*	*17*	*18*	*19*	*20*	*21*	*22*
Parry Modification	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4

Foundchild Cult



By Sandy Petersen

I. MYTHOS AND HISTORY

A. BEFORE TIME

Foundchild was first discovered by Helpwoman during the Great Darkness. Though an infant when found, he rapidly grew to manhood. While doing so, he was nurtured and cherished by the woman, whose inner power had founded a group that struggled together to survive. Upon reaching adulthood, he taught them the use of death as a tool to bring life. He also taught the songs to send slain beasts' spirits back to the Protectresses.

B. SINCE TIME BEGAN

After Time, Foundchild has chiefly been a god of hunters, and has many worshippers. His worship has developed into a fraternal society in which the strong are respected, and the weak are protected.

C. LIFE AFTER DEATH

The followers believe that they will go to a Happy Hunting Ground after death. They will stay there for many years before again entering the cycle of birth/rebirth. Foundchild's worshippers generally follow the burial customs of their tribe, or else place their dead on raised platforms.

D. RUNIC ASSOCIATIONS

The chief Runes associated with Foundchild are the Power Runes of Death and Harmony. Though Foundchild slays beasts, he does so in order to save life, and is friendly to the Protectresses, hence the Harmony Rune.

II. NATURE OF THE CULT

A. REASON FOR CONTINUED EXISTENCE

Nearly all the tribes of Prax supplement their regular diet with hunted wild beasts. The cult of Foundchild supplies the hunters for this purpose. Most of the best hunters belong to this cult, and it provides occasion for these hunters to meet together and socialize.

B. SOCIOPOLITICAL POSITION AND POWER

Foundchild's cult does not directly wield any power in the tribes. However, the opinions of the hunters are always respected in tribal councils, and many fear those following Foundchild's path. This cult often decreases as civilization and agriculture encroach, but the nomads will probably always worship him, and outdwelling peasants that hunt deer and rabbits may call upon his name.

C. PARTICULAR LIKES AND DISLIKES

Foundchild is friendly towards Waha, Eiritha, and Orlanth. He does not view the herds as supplanting, but as supplementing his mode of life. Those that wantonly slaughter animals

without need incur his hatred. Being born during the Great Darkness, Foundchild had a good look at Chaos closely and firmly opposes it.

III. ORGANIZATION

A. INTER-CULT ORGANIZATION

In common with many other small nomadic cults, there is little or no communication between other bands of worshippers. On the rare occasions that tribes meet together for trade or festivals, the Foundchild worshippers will usually seek each other out to boast, eat together, and trade hides.

B. INTRA-TEMPLE ORGANIZATION

The greatest hunter in the clan is traditionally the head of the cult. All others defer to him and show respect. He cannot command obedience, but he can request it. Each year, during the three weeks just prior to Sacred Time, there is the Great Hunt and all followers of Foundchild participate, attempting to bring in the most magnificent creature. The winner is designated the First Hunter and the head of the cult, the next few are designated Great Hunters, and the rest are simply Hunters. This is explained further in the initiates section.

C. CENTER OF POWER, HOLY PLACES

As a nomadic cult, there is no true center of power, but the strongest foci of this cult are amont those tribes that do not herd, such as the Men-and-a-half or Telmori. The only important Holy Place is the site where Foundchild was discovered, near the Good Place.

D. HOLY DAYS AND HIGH HOLY DAYS

In Prax, Foundchild typically observes the Waha holidays for convenience. The weeks of the Great Hunt are also sacred, but no special rites are performed until Sacred Time, when the champion hunters are chosen.

IV. LAY MEMBERSHIP – HUNTERS

A. REQUIREMENTS TO JOIN

The prospective member must be supported, at least partly, by hunting activity (whether by his parents or himself is irrelevant). This shuts out most townfolk. The member must also have at least a 30% skill with a missile weapon.

B. REQUIREMENTS TO BELONG

A lay member must hunt and bring one prey mammal or bird per season to donate to the tribe. He must never leave a slain animal to rot.

C. MUNDANE BENEFITS

As this cult is more or less an exclusive brotherhood, the lay member gains the social benefits of being allowed to hobnob with well-known hunters. He also gains the title Hunter and may go on the Great Hunt.

D. SKILLS

The Foundchild cult teaches appropriate missile skills and Tracking to members at half price, and Peaceful Cut at the rate of 300/500/1000/EXP.

E. SPELLS

Foundchild teaches his followers Speedart, Multimissile, and Silence at half price. He teaches no other spells.

V. INITIATE MEMBERSHIP – GREAT HUNTERS

A. REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIATION

An initiate is one that has brought in a prey animal during the great hunt that exceeds ten treasure factors in worth. He must have slain it alone and unarmored. If an initiate performs this feat three years running, he becomes a permanent initiate. Alternatively, if the prospect can bring in a beast worth 11+ treasure factors alive, he is made a permanent initiate on the spot! This may include a wild bison, a bear, or anything similar. Intelligent animals are not acceptable. He must also know Peaceful Cut at at least 20%.

B. REQUIREMENTS TO REMAIN INITIATED

He is even more strictly bound to never waste animal life, and is forbidden to slay an animal needlessly. (Hunger is considered sufficient need.) He must bring a fitting donation to the cult thrice a season.

C. MUNDANE BENEFITS

Initiates receive more respect than lay members. If an initiate is injured or ill, and cannot feed himself or his family, the cult will care for him through the food donations that are brought in by the members. Permanent initiates are given the right to call themselves Great Hunters.

D. SKILLS

Initiates may learn Camouflage and Snare Setting at half price. They may also learn the Peaceful Cut for free and increase in it just as a Waha member. They may be taught Spot Hidden Items, Hide in Cover, and Move Quietly, as well, but at normal prices.

E. SPELLS

If an initiate does not already know Speedart, it is taught to him for free. He may also learn Farsee, Binding, Mobility, Detect Life, Detect Traps, and Disruption (which is useful for small prey such as songbirds and rodents) at half price. Permanent initiates may sacrifice characteristic POW for one-use only cult special Rune Spells.

VI. RUNE LORD MEMBERSHIP MASTER HUNTERS

A. GENERAL STATEMENT

Rune Lords are expected to be the epitome of the Great Hunters. They are expected to give freely and unselfishly of their catch to those that need it, though they must first feed themselves. They must fearlessly fulfill the missions given them by tribal leaders. They are also in great demand in wartime as scouts.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE

A Rune Lord must have a 90% ability in a missile weapon and Tracking. In addition, he needs three more 90% skills chosen from among the following: Camouflage, Hide in Cover, Move Quietly, Set Snare, Spot Hidden Item, Riding, Spot Trap, or the Peaceful Cut. He must also be a permanent initiate, and in the most recent Great Hunt have captured the beast with the highest treasure factor of any initiate. If he has captured a beast alive, it counts double for treasure factors. Thus, only one Rune Lord is accepted per area per year, unless two or more candidates tie for first place (a rare event).

C. RESTRICTIONS

Rune Lords must never show fear of an animal. He must never steal another's catch. If called upon for some task by his tribe or cult, such as ridding the herds of a particularly obnoxious predator, he must unfailingly fulfill it. He is under obligation to punish (though not slay) anyone that abuses the skills of hunting by wantonly killing prey or other misuse. They must donate one prey animal per week.

D. BENEFITS

Rune Lords of this cult rarely wear much armor (and are not allowed to wear any during the Great Hunt) but if they desire it, and can obtain it, they may wear iron armor while on missions or during wartime. They have the usual benefits of Divine Intervention. They can command the obedience of other cult initiates or members in emergencies. He is qualified to be the head of the cult if he can win the Great Hunt by bringing in the greatest prize (measured in treasure factors, and this can include destructive intelligent beasts, such as dragons, or even giants).

VII. RUNE PRIESTHOOD

A. GENERAL STATEMENT

Rune Priests organize the hunts and often lead hunting parties alongside the Master Hunters. These are the people that most often deal with other members of the tribe, as Rune Lords tend to be somewhat conceited and aloof. They are required to be hunters, and their DEX based skills need not drop to DEXx5, but can continue to increase. However, they are not permitted to purchase training.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE

Priests must be permanent initiates, have a POW of 18+, and know Beast Speech to at least 80%.

C. RESTRICTIONS

Rune Priests have generally the same restrictions as Rune Lords, but are not required to hunt and donate food to the tribe. Instead, they oversee the distribution of food to the needy.

D. BENEFITS

Rune Priests are allowed to keep for personal use 5% of the prey given to him for distribution. They command much respect, but not as much as Rune Lords. They may command the obedience of initiates and members in emergencies. They are also allowed to participate in the Great Hunt with an eye to becoming the head of the cult. The senior priest judges the contests and is required to be impartial. He also receives the winner's beast as a trophy (as an incentive to choose the most impressive).

E. RUNE SPELL COMPATIBILITY

Rune Priests of Foundchild are restricted to one point spells and Concealment from the standard Rune Spell list. They may not Dismiss Elementals, nor may they call upon them.

F. CULT SPECIAL RUNE SPELLS

SURESHOT — Cost – 1 POW point

Range – Touch — Duration – Until fired

Stackable – No limit — Reusable

This spell is cast on a missile of some kind, such as an arrow, rock or even handaxe. When that missile is fired or hurled, it automatically hits the target, regardless of range, movement of target, or other factors, up to the maximum range of the missile. It still misses with a roll of 96+ and the character's % chance to impale and fumble remain the same as before casting the spell. A character may not roll for experience on the basis of a hit with a Sureshot. Each additional point of this spell allows one more missile to be affected. The priest may not reuse this spell until the missiles have been used. If the priest simultaneously casts a successful Divine Intervention, the missile automatically impales when it hits. This spell is stackable with Speedart.

DRAW BEAST — Cost – 1 POW point

Range – 320 meters — Duration – 15 minutes

Stackable – No limit — Reusable

When this spell is cast upon a non-intelligent beast of any sort, it causes that animal to move toward the caster at walking speed. The animal is allowed to resist the initial attack. For each additional point stacked, an additional beast may be affected.

BEASTMASTER — Cost – 3 POW points

Range – 160 meters — Duration – 15 minutes

Stackable – No limit — Reusable

This spell may be cast on non-intelligent mammals. If they fail to resist, then they must move as the priest directs for the duration of the spell, though they will refuse to leap off cliffs, or other obvious deaths. They will not fight for him, or otherwise serve. Once controlled, they may move out of the 160 meter range and will remain controlled. This is an active spell, and if the priest is disturbed, the animals are freed from him. For each additional point of Beastmaster stacked with the the original three points, one additional beast may be targeted. It will work on riding animals.

VIII. SUBSERVIENT CULTS

A. SPIRIT OF REPRISAL

Members that grossly violate the principles of the cult are cursed by Foundchild himself, to the effect that he will gain a strong, foul odor. This will prevent him from sneaking up or stalking any beasts unless there is a strong wind blowing downwind, and incidentally make him an outcast from his tribe until the odor goes away. It is only removed upon proper repentance by the hunter.

IX. ASSOCIATED CULTS

A. WAHA

Waha provides Foundchild with the skill of Peaceful Cut, taught to initiates.



GAME REVIEW

IN THE LABYRINTH

By Steve Perrin

In the Labyrinth is the Game Master's Module for Metagaming's long-awaited fantasy role-playing game, *The Fantasy Trip*, designed by Steve Jackson. It was worth the wait.

This is a full size book, 80 pages, and sells for $4.95. It is available with 50 cents postage from Metagaming, PO Box 15346, Austin, TX 78761.

This is not a complete game. Players will at least need the module, plus both *Melee* and *Wizard* Microgames. A further problem is that, even with the two Microgames, the game is still not complete. The module makes continual references to Poison, Fire as Weapon, Alchemy, Magic Items, and Chemistry. This is usually written as "see Poison," etc. None of these elements are in the book, nor are they in the Microgames. They will probably be in one of the later volumes of *TFT, Advanced Melee* and *Advanced Wizard*. They will also be $4.95 books. *Tollenkar's Lair* is also announced and will be a ready-to-play labyrinth with maps, notes, background, and instructions.

A MATTER OF STYLE

This is an impressive piece of writing. Steve Jackson has a good, clear, prose style, informal yet informative, a joy to read. Moreover, the book is full of good advice on being a Game Master for *TFT* and a background on the immense world of Cirdi on which all *TFT* adventures supposedly take place (created by the Mnorem, a group of world-builders like Phillip Jose Farmer's *Maker of Universes*).

The book also has a lot of information on new weapons, earning a living, and social structure, plus a tunnel complex, a town layout, and a map of the Duchy of Dran.

More important, the book adds the major element of learnable skills to the basic sterile arena combat of *Melee* and *Wizard*. Now the games can be true role-playing games.

With ability to acquire skills such as Horsemanship, Swimming, Boating, specific weapon skills, Sex Appeal, etc., the dumbest character (these are all IQ 8 skills) can have specific skills which enhance his personality and give dimension to the gladiators of *Melee*.

One of the fascinating skills available to the character is for Priests. There are no gods in this game. All spells are strictly the baliwick of the magicians. The skill of the Priest is that of organizing worship, making sermons, collecting funds, etc. A grudging provision is made for a Priest to maybe, if the GM really insists, have a slight control of probability (like the *D&D /AD&D* Bless spell). Basically, there are many religions in Cirdi, but no gods, unless the local powerful Wizard serves the function.

Steve has also added a *C&S*-like alignment roll (actually several attitude and/or morality rolls) as an option for instant personality generation. Unlike *C&S*, however, this is not an integral part of the game, but simply a handy mechanism when the time or inspiration is not available for instant personality generation for a character. In themselves, these tables are of use to any FRP system.

One of the charms of this module is the continual supply of quick systems for setting up characters or situations, with a balancing emphasis on the need for carefully crafted adventures if the game is to go properly.

Perhaps the best part of the book is a column by publisher Howard Thompson, describing the story-telling requirements of being a GM. Truer words were never spoken.

OTHER GOODIES

The rules also supply monster descriptions which are written in a format strangely like the first edition of *RuneQuest*. First the intelligent humanoid monsters, then the intelligent monsters, then beasts and riding animals, etc. Better he should have followed second edition *RQ* and alphabetized them.

However, a number of excellent new monsters have been added to the obligatory elves, dragons, centaurs, etc. The rules even provide specs for normal monsters like lions and tigers and bears (oh, my!) which previous rules sets such as *D&D* and *RQ* usually left out. Good show.

As well as the aforementioned maps of tunnel complexes, a village, and the Duchy of Dran, there are several pages of copiable character sheets, hex sheets, odd-shaped megahexes, and other neat stuff.

SUPER CHARACTERS

A personal cavil I have with *TFT* game system is the use of the *Tunnels & Trolls* mechanism of increases in level allowing the character to add points to characteristics. On a small scale, this is reasonable (actually indicating simple hardening of muscle, quickening of reflexes, and more stuff memorized). Over the long run, it allows for an incredibly strong, lightning fast, cosmically intelligent character who seems to have stepped directly from the pages of Marvel or DC Comics. In fact, Spiderman is exactly the model Ken St. Andre, author of *T&T*, uses as a justification for the incredible strength a high-level *T&T* character can have. In this module, Steve proposes a limit on Strength, but no serious prohibition is given to infinite increases of any characteristic, aside from the eventual mortality of the character. This is a realism issue that rankles me, but others have no problem with it. It's a matter of taste.

However, one major objection I do have to the rules (and it is an endemic condition with most such sets) is the layout. There is a very sparse table of contents and no index, and the various chapters of the table of contents are not obvious in the book. One feels that the general organization is actually OK, but the cross referencing could have used a bit more care in the one-and-a-half years since the rule set was first announced as coming out Real Soon Now.

Despite my earlier cavils, this is a very readable and enjoyable work. As a guide for GMs who devise the fantasy worlds for others to adventure in, this is an excellent reference, whether the users ever play *Melee* or *Wizard* or neither one. I, for one, look forward to the *Advanced Melee* and *Advanced Wizard* rules.



BETTER GAME MASTERING

POWER GROUPS AND PLAYER CHARACTERS IN RPGs

By James M. Ward

In 99% of all role-playing games, there is a definite need for the players in their respective game positions to have goals and concepts that they can strive for. The creation of power groups in any given game situation can do just that for both players and Game Masters. When I created (with a great deal of help) the groups for *Gamma World*, I was already working on a batch of power groups for the Starship Warden and my *Metamorphosis Alpha* game. At the same time that I was developing these power groups in my mind and on paper, a group of players were working on their own village and base of power.

On the Starship Warden (in my game) there are three main groups that have power on more than one of the 17 levels: the Wolfoids, the Androids, and the Men of the Starburst. There are also three lesser organizations that work on one level, but are able to travel about the ship: a group of lizard men (the Sleeth), a group of Nr. 3 humanoids (calling themselves "The People"), and the small group of player characters (calling themselves "The Vigilists").

In creating these factions, it was necessary to give them more than just a list of what they had and what they could do. It was necessary to have them move, react to things on the ship, and give them goals to work for. When this is done and kept constantly in motion by the GM, the players can't help but find themselves creating their own goals in response or moving with the ones that the GM has created.

The Wolfoids are creatures trying to understand (and use all of the mutational capabilities on the starship. This group is constantly breeding within their own species for mutational powers and taming the wild creatures of the wilderness areas to get the use of their power. To better this effort, the group has created outposts (wooden stockades) on most of the levels of the ship. These areas help the Wolfoids collect the new mutants that they want and act as funnels for the leaders of the specie. When important things are discovered by the scouts of the forts, they are given to a leader group of the Wolfoids to be worked on. In this way, the technological power of this group is consolidated and placed where the danger to the specie is greatest.

The Androids have evolved from contaminated vats on the medical level of the starship. I figured that they overran this level during the confusion caused by the radiation cloud and took great pains to fortify the area against what they thought would be an attack from the surviving humans of the ship. When this event did not occur, the Androids established themselves on other security levels as well as the medical sections. They used their medically programmed abilities to try and figure out the systems of the ship (something they have been only partially successful at after hundreds of years). The rise of mutants found these chemical creations at a loss as to how to take care of them. Time after time (in my mind), they have been defeated by a handful of half starved mutant creatures; with some of these not even intelligent! When technological might failed, the vat men were forced to resort to trickery to get control of things. They now create Androids that look like mutants or humans in tribes that they have observed. These fake creatures come into the tribal situation with just enough technology to set themselves up as Shaaman and then they start preaching against all the other power groups and against mutants when possible. This course of action is supposed to keep groups fighting among themselves while the Androids work on getting more technological power.

The Men of the Starburst are the descendants of the crew of several sections of the ship. They all gathered together on one level, in one small city and have been able to keep their technological level up while creating new devices of their own. Their main problem is numbers. They are pure breed humans that have a very low birth rate and deaths among this groups are a serious problem. To combat this, they have taken to hiding in the out of the way areas of the ship: places like maintenance tunnels, islands, and an escape craft outside the skin of the Starship Warden itself. This group is currently trying to fix the most severe damage from level to level so that when their numbers do become greater, they will be able to use these systems to control the other intelligences of the starship.

The lizard men of the ship are based in a swamp/jungle section of the ship and while not technically advanced, have great fighting powers. They have a warrior tradition that forces them to go off their level and kill five creatures that are bigger than they are in size. They trade with the Wolfoids and are capable of learning about artifacts, they just haven't yet.

Nr. 3 humanoids are perfect for those small areas all over the ship where bigger creatures cannot enter. I have these around for several special purposes. They are able to create chemicals that can cure any sickness and negate the effects of any poison. Because of this, they are safe from attack from any intelligent race that wants to trade with them for these chemicals. They are also there to take care of any player character who thinks that they are unstopable. Nr. 3 humanoids use crossbows with darts that shoot intensity 18 poison and if that wasn't enough, if these creatures are attacked, they force the larger beings that depend on them for poison cures to attack their enemies until they are dead and these creatures carry a grudge forever.

With all of these species moving

about the ship (in my mind and on paper), the player characters calling themselves "The Vigilists" evolved. They started from a small group of players that began on a desert level several sections up from where they now live. As they traveled through this area, they came across a Wolfoid patrol that they thought they were forced to kill (thus making them want to destroy Wolfoids from then on), and then they came across one of the best things on my ship: an emergency escape ship. They had to take care of two security robots to get in, but this they accomplished and what they found inside set them up for life. They communicated with the escape ship's computer and it taught them many things that they were to use later. They accidentally activated the lift-out sequence, but before this happened, they managed to take out of the ship a group of robots, anti-grav sleds, weapons, and devices that had been first placed there to help colonists settle on a world. They took these devices and set up a small village on another level (because they knew they were being chased by Wolfoid and Robotic intelligence alike). They set up their compound and left marks at the main ship's elevator so that they might get followers and from this they started more adventuring so that they ran across the village of thirtlev. The Vigilists were wary from the first of the Shaamans and followed him out of the village at one point and discovered a hidden hut in the forest where they attacked and killed the Android fake (turning it into red gel at its destruction), from then on they also put Androids on their enemy lists. It has been the Vigilists' policy to accept new members for the knowledge that they bring and to explore the ship trying to learn as much as possible without getting killed. From the very begining they have taken great pains to be cautious with every unknown situation, a precaution that has served to keep them alive for longer than any other player group.

I mention this group to illustrate the point of this piece. My players are reacting to the other groups and forming goals and concepts of their own in response. No matter where a player starts on my ship, they will run into one of these groups and will be forced to react and form ideas; thus making for a good time for all.

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How will you get Imelda and save Hagedorn? By finding the magical treasures in the Tower that you will turn against Morloc. That is, after you decipher their meaning, and learn how to use them.

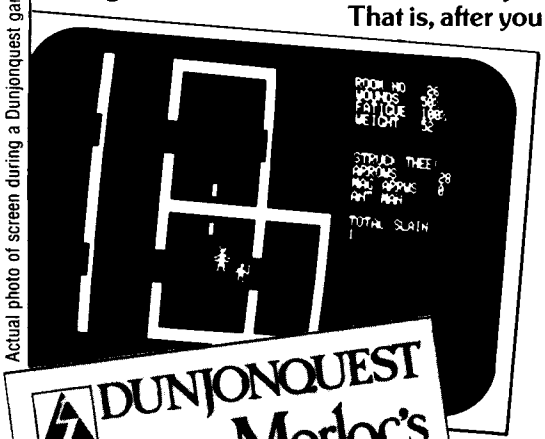
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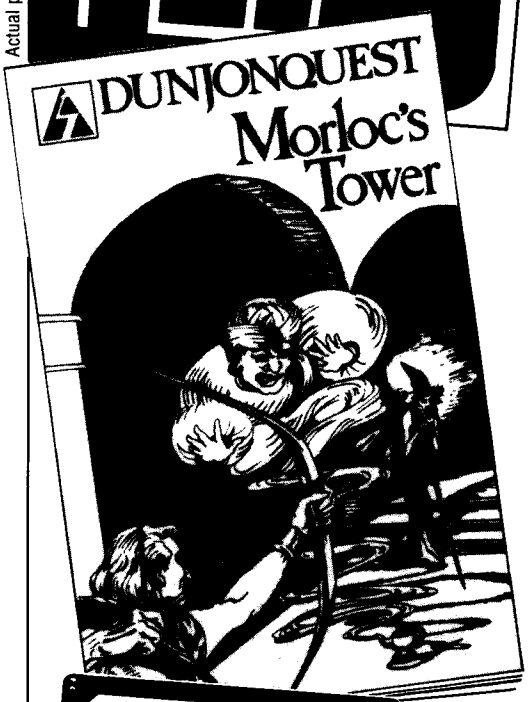
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Actual photo of screen during a Dunjonquest game.







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METAL MARVELS

TWO FROM GRENADIER

By John T. Sapienza, Jr.

Welcome to a new feature of *Different Worlds*, a regular column of reviews on miniature figures. Those of you who have not been introduced to the use of figures in gaming may wonder why such a column may be useful to the gamer. The answer is simple – the hobby grew out of the hobby of wargaming with figures, and there are a large number of fantasy figures on the market for those who use them to personify specific characters, or monsters. They are also very helpful in determining the location of each character when that fireball went off, or deciding whether you have a clear line of sight to shoot an arrow, or an unobstructed path between you and the doorway, etc. The hobby of painting figures is a pastime in itself, and I recommend to those who are interested that they read the "Fantasysmith" column in *The Dragon* for further information.

This feature in *DW* is directed to a different purpose. The many figures on the market are described rather poorly in the manufacturers' catalogs. That is to say, it really isn't sufficient to describe a figure as "hero with sword" when you need to know whether it will adequately represent a specific character who uses plate armor and shield. So what I will be doing here and in future columns is taking individual lines of figures by various manufacturers and describing each figure in detail while reviewing it for quality. Over a period of time, these columns will provide a descriptive catalog of all the figures available on the US market. For other information and catalogs, write directly to the companies listed in this issue of *DW*.

This issue reviews two lines recently issued by Grenadier Models, Inc. Most "lines" in the past were titles of series in which figures would be released from time to time, but this time we are speaking of physically distinct boxes of figures. Each of these new *Wizzards & Warriors* boxes contains 20 figures, each different, for $12 a box. This is a major marketing innovation by Grenadier from the previous practice of selling figures in blister packs. It is likely to be copied by other companies, since a box this size is substantial enough to interest major stores as well as hobby shops.



WOODLAND ADVENTURERS

The first box is *Woodland Adventurers*, number WW07 in the Grenadier catalog. (Later runs of this will be renumbered 5003 in Grenadier's *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons* figure series.) It comes with a color cover depicting a group of humans, elves, dwarves, and hobbits in a forest setting, with ents in the background. This is pretty, but doesn't really depict the contents of the box, as few of the people on the cover are included as figures inside. However, visible on the bottom of the box is complete set of photographs of the figures in the box, with a title for each figure, so you can tell ahead of time what you are getting. The box itself is roughly 8"x8"x1", and is designed to carry figures around as a travel/storage box. Each figure has its own space in the foam compartments within the box, which can be custom adapted for special needs.

The box contains six humans, six elves, four gnomes, two dwarves, and two hobbits (or three, depending on how you look at it). I will describe them below by race, rather than in the order they appear on the photo page on the bottom of the box, so they will appear out of numerical order, but in related groups. I give the number of each figure in case you want to write to the company about specific figures.

The Magician (14) is a human male with a long beard, wearing the traditional long robes and a broad brimmed tall pointed hat. He

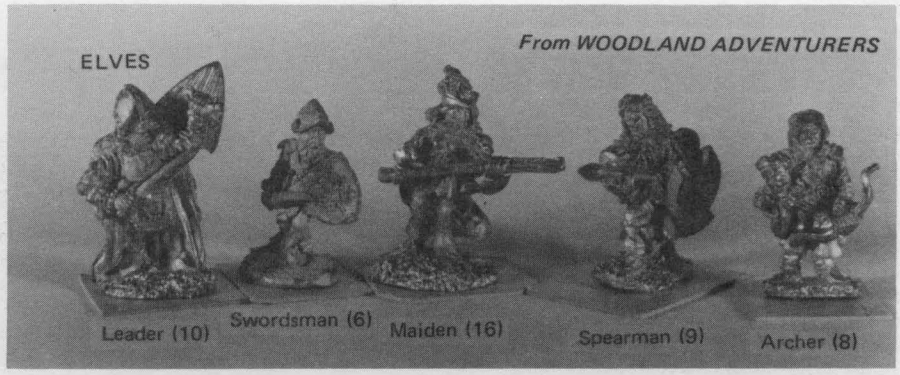
holds a staff with a shepherd's-crook appearance in his left hand while raising his right hand in greeting. This is a fairly typical mage figure, perfectly useful but not as distinguished as some of the other Grenadier mages. The figure is 36mm tall. (Note that all Grenadier human figures are 29mm tall from head to foot (if standing up); the measurements given here are from the bottom of the base to the top of the tallest part of the figure.)

Cedric the Cleric (1) is a human male with a large pot belly, wearing a metal helmet and leather robes. He carries a flanged mace raised threateningly in his right hand and a walking stick in his left. He wears a cross around his neck and a gourd for a water flask at his waist. Note that the pot belly is very smooth, and with the right paint effect could be made to look like a metal cuirass for a figure in plate armor partially hidden by robes. The figure is 36mm tall.

The Bard (17) is a human male in what could be either clothing or leather armor, and wears a feathered cap, a jacket with a large collar, trousers and shoes or low boots. He carries a sword in a parrying position in his left hand (a left-handed figure is a rarity), while with his right he steadies the neck of the downward-slung lute over his back. He has a dagger scabbarded at his belt, and a large pouch there also. The sword should be unusually sturdy, since it is fastened to the hand on one end and to the top of the knee on the other. This figure is in action and looks it, a pose that I prefer to those that are just standing around. The figure is 30mm tall.

The Ranger/Scout (20) is a human male kneeling on the right knee while resting the left arm on the left knee and looking hard at an amulet (or compass?) held in the left hand. The figure is dressed in clothing or leather armor and wearing a cape with cloak over his head. He has a scabbarded knife at his belt, holds a shield over his left arm and rests an axe against his right shoulder while holding it in his right hand. This is a well-done figure, and should appeal to painters and scene builders, but it may be of less use to those who prefer standing figures to depict their characters in gaming. The detail in the figure is very good, in the features of the face, in the clothing, even in the structure of the axe. The figure is 25mm tall.

The Ranger (13) is a male human, but carries a shield with the elven oaktree motif, and wears the hood typical of elves in this box, so I suspect that this originated as an elf figure and got renamed at the last minute. The figure is bearded, however, which casts doubt on its being elvish; maybe the ranger got the shield from a friendly elf. Anyway, he is charging foward with shortsword extended in right hand and shield in left, and his cape swirling out behind. A knife is in a scabbard at his belt. It's an attractively vigorous pose. The figure is 29mm tall and 41 mm wide.



The Chest Bearer (12) is a bearded human male carrying a heavy chest over his back with both hands, one over each shoulder. He wears a metal cap and wears clothing or leather armor, and heavy boots. Strapped to his belt are a scabbarded knife and sword, and a pack is strapped over his right shoulder. This is probably a hired follower, paid to bear burdens and carry loot won in the expedition but probably not to do a great deal of fighting, since he is not heavily armored and carries no shield. On the other hand, this could easily be a successful Thief figure. The figure is 25mm tall, bent over with the weight of the chest. Grenadier seems to like this idea, and we can expect to see more "follower" figures in the future.

The Gnome Swordsman (2) wears what could be either padded leather or scale armor, a helmet with ram's horns, and carries a short sword in his right hand and a squared off shield with a "Y"-like rune in his left. It is a bearded male, carries a sheathed dagger at his belt, and could serve as a nice dwarf figure in a pinch. The figure is 22mm tall.

The Gnome with Poleaxe (3) stands on guard with a poleaxe in his right hand with its butt resting on the floor, and a shield in his left hand. His armor and shield are identical to that of figure 2, and he is a bearded male, with a dagger in scabbard at his belt. The figure is 27mm tall, 22mm to top of head, which has a simpler round helmet than figure 2 does.

The Gnome with Battleaxe (4) holds a two-handed axe over his right shoulder at the apparent beginning of a swing. He is a bearded male with the usual gnome armor, helmet, and scabbarded knife, and is 24mm tall, 22mm to top of head. He has his regular gnome shield slung over his back.

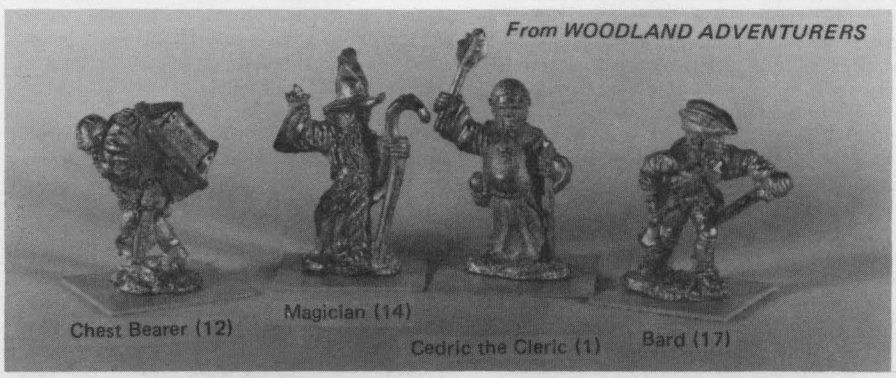
The Gnome King (18) sits on his throne, a tree stump carved as a chair, with what appears to be mushroom steps going up and carved heads on either side. The king is bearded and richly robed, with a crown that is an effective fighting helmet, and rests his sceptre across his lap. His battleaxe and shield rest against the foot of the throne. The figure is 37mm tall. It's a nice piece for a scene of gnomes, but has little utility on the gameboard.

The Dwarf Spearman (11) holds a round wooden shield with his left hand while preparing to either throw or stab with his spear over the shield with his right hand. The figure is of a bearded male with long hair. It's a little hard to see what kind of armor the figure is wearing because of its position, but it's wearing an elaborately banded metal cap and a flowing cape. The spear seems to me to be unduly thick, almost 3mm at its thickest place, but it's guaranteed to be sturdy. The figure is 25mm tall.

The Dwarf Bowman (15) is a bearded male in chainmail and a floppy hat with a pouch and a scabbarded dagger at his belt. He has a quiver of arrows over his shoulder, and has just shot an arrow from his shortbow. The figure is 25mm tall. For some reason, neither dwarf comes off with as much character as the gnomes, but they're perfectly good figures.

The Halfling Lookouts (5) is one figure of two male hobbits, one standing on the other's shoulders and holding a spear with one hand as a staff for support while he shields his eyes with the other. He's wearing a cloak over his head, and until you look closely, you'll think it is a figure of a single human standing there. I personally find the idea overcute, but it's bound to appeal to the humor of some buyers. My major problem with the figure is that I can't really see much use for it in gaming.

The Halfling Sniper (19) is a male hobbit standing in an old half-stump for cover as he prepares to shoot his crossbow at an unsuspecting intruder. It's a lovely figure, with head hidden in a cloaking hood, a quiver of quarrels strapped to his belt, and a quarrel resting in its groove in the crossbow. Ivy grows up the outside of the stump. You don't normally carry a stump around with you, so the utility of this figure in gaming is questionable; but Grenadier told me that someone ordered a large number of these to populate a forest, so this figure was actually useful in gaming for somebody. The figure is in keeping with the woodland theme of this box. And is not beauty its own reward? The figure is 21mm tall.



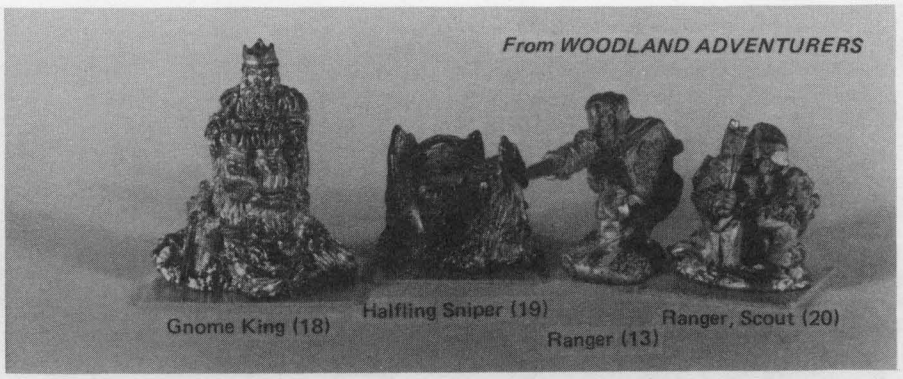
Grenadier elves require some comment. Running typically the same height as humans, they don't fit many people's vision of elves as being shorter. However, they do fit the Tolkien elf description, and thus have some valid-

ity in literature. And they are very attractive figures.

The Elf Swordsman (6) is charging forward with sword almost horizontal at waist height in the right hand, and an oaktree motif shield in the left. This is a male elf, wearing a helmet with a 16th century Spanish flavor, with a scabbarded dagger at his belt and a pack slung over his left shoulder. He is wearing leather armor. The figure is 30mm tall.

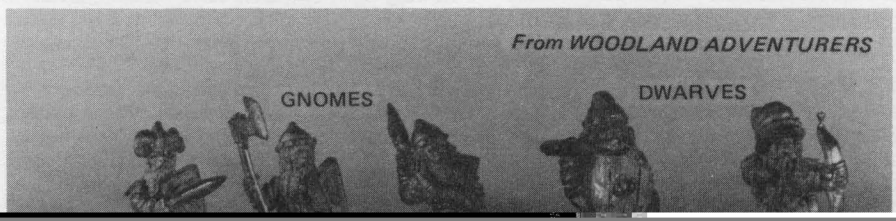
There are two *Elf Archers (7, 8)*, both in leather armor and with the hoods to their cloaks over their heads. The first is in the process of loosing an arrow, and has a dagger and pouch at his belt. The second is standing with bow in his left hand and his right hand resting on his belt, awaiting activity. Both have quivers of arrows over their backs. While I prefer the active pose to the passive, I realize that it is helpful in a group of figures to have different poses available for variety, so I guess I have no complaint about having one archer standing there. Also, since neither has an arrow to his bow (a most difficult thing to cast in lead), it may be that we are supposed to imagine an arrow between hand and bow, waiting to be raised to shoot. The first is 30mm and the second 28mm tall.

The Elf Spearman (9) is a beautifully active figure, charging forward with spear held in both hands and with shield ready in the left hand/arm. It is a male elf in elaborate clothes (a challenge to the painter to come up with attractive colors), with a cape swirling out behind him. The shield is round with a semi-circular section cut out of its top. The figure wears no helmet, and its long hair streams down its shoulders. A dagger is scabbarded at the figure's right side. This is my favorite figure in the box, but I am afraid that what I received will no longer be in production when you read this. It turns out that the spear was not coming out of the molds well, and so the figure is being resculpted to put it on the figure's right instead of the left side. But I assume the new figure will be similar in most other respects to that described here. The figure is 30mm tall and 37mm wide.



The High Elven Leader (10) wears a furred cape and rich clothing, in keeping with his station. He holds a sword in his right hand with the blade across his chest, while he holds high in his left hand an unusual shield with a tulip design on it. His helmet is in the shape of an upside-down tulip. Very unusual, and it paints up beautifully. The figure is 36mm tall, 32mm to top of head.

The Elf Maiden (16) is the only female in the box, which says something about the hobby. (Grenadier will issue a box of ten female miniatures in June, however.) This is unusual in another respect, because she holds a quarterstaff horizontally with gloved hands, a weapon not often seen on figures. She wears leather armor, a feathered hat, and a cape that swirls around her as if she were in the process of pivoting around – a motion-depicting device typically used to great effect by Andrew L. Chernak, president and chief sculptor of Grenadier, who did all the *Woodland Adventurer* figures except this one, which is by Raymond A. Rubin. The figure is 33mm tall and 30mm wide. This is a bit too tall, in my opinion, and would have been a more reasonable height if it hadn't been given such a thick



You may be wondering why I give both height and width for only a few figures, giving only height for most. This is to let the reader know whether a figure is standard size or larger than normal. Height gives the scale of the figure, and is important if you need an exact match with other related figures. (This is usually not very important unless the difference is great.) Width tells you whether a given figure is too wide to fit in your usual storage system, whatever that may be if you have one. I, for example, store most painted figures in 35mm film cans (available free from photo dealers), wrapped in folded tissue to keep them from rattling around. This gives great protection, but while it holds most figures it won't hold unusually wide or high ones, and it is useful to know this ahead of time, so you can get something special to hold them.

Some general comments on Grenadier figures may be helpful. Like most cast lead figures, these need to be trimmed of excess pieces or strips of metal. For this, an *X-Acto No. 1* knife will do most of the work, although it is useful to have a pair of wire strippers for cutting off thick pieces. And a set of fine metal files will give you control for fine finishing, although for gross work an emory board is my preference. The latter is what I use on Grenadier sword and spear points, which are deliberately cast to be thick and blunt from the mold. This gives them great strength by comparison to the thin blades cast by some other companies. And when sharpened with a file or emory board, the finished weapon is quite satisfactory. So do not be turned off by first impression on Grenadier weapons, they merely require a bit of fine finishing for use.

atmospheric, giving a sense of skeletons coming to life from a pile of bones to attack the intruders. It may not seem particularly useful in gaming, but Grenadier gets orders for those who need skeletons with bows.

Undead are also to be found in more powerful forms here. *The Wight (6)* is a gaunt figure dressed in the rags of rich robes, with its furred cloak. Its hair stands out thickly from its beardless face as it looks up from contemplating the skull between its feet. Very nasty. The figure is 30mm tall.

The Wraith (9) is a floating cloak with its hood up, with no visible body within its empty hood and sleeves. There are two pits within the hood for painting glowing red eyes. This presents an adequately menacing figure, but it would have been better with a base to hold it up – mine insisted on falling over whenever the table moved slightly, and I had to use putty to hold it up. Ideally, this would be mounted on a base with a wire holding up the floating wraith, with different ones at different heights. The figure is 28mm tall.

The Liche (7) is the king of the skeletons, and appears as a crowned skeleton in furred cloak and robes. The head is well sculpted, and even still has its hair, unusual for a skeleton; mayhap it is a wig, showing that the liche is vain about its appearance? The ribs and bones are better sculpted on this figure than the other skeletons. While the liche carries no weapons or armor, it appears to be in the process of casting a spell. A very nice piece. The figure is 31mm tall.

The Necromancer (16) is appropriate for this box as a creator of undead. This is a marvelous figure, a bearded male human in robes, with the hood shrouding his head. He holds a magic staff horizontally over his head in both hands. Seen from behind, his robes swirl off to the left. Seen from the front, the figure is framed by smoke arising from a brazier on the ground in front of the necromancer. Very evocative of magic, and usable as a figure for a magic user who uses a brazier to summon elementals, for example. Or, if you cut out the brazier from the figure you can leave it with the impression that the smoke is coming from the tip of the staff and moving down and around the mage. Quite impressive. The figure is 35mm tall, 28mm to top of the mage's head, and 43mm wide.



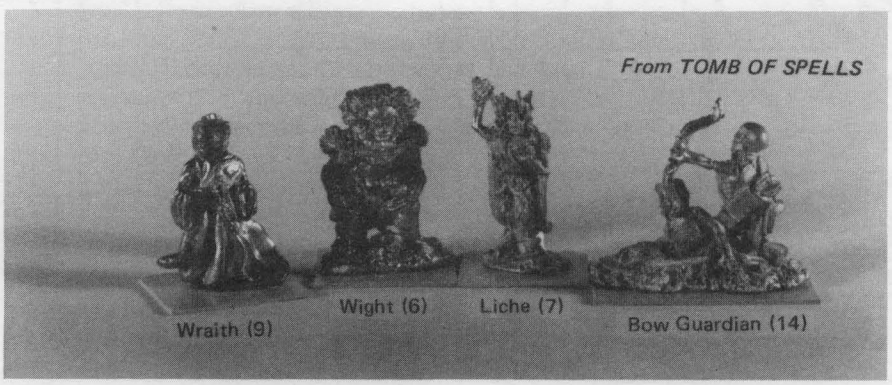
The Mindflayer (8) is right out of the *D&D* books. A Cthuluian figure in mage's robes, its four tentacles hanging over its chest, it spreads its arms to either side, with the left hand up and the right hand down, an active but cryptic pose. It has a peculiar beltwork at its front, suggestive of a pilot's harness but not the same, and a belt from which a pouch hangs at its side. The figure is 30mm tall.

Larvae are wormlike creatures with distorted human heads, and are the most evil souls in Hades. They are used by liches to retain their undead status and powers, which is why they fit in with the contents of this box. The figure shows three, entwined together, and is 12mm tall and 27mm long.

The Spider (19) is appropriately creepy looking, and is big enough (15mm tall and 34mm wide) to be menacing. But it actually is not a spider, since it has only six legs and spiders have eight. I assume this will be redone for later runs of this box to correct that.

The Djinn (11) and *Efreet (15)* figures are lovely. Designed for portability, they show the upper torso of each, with the bottom hidden by cloud for the first and fire for the second, in keeping with their elemental natures. The djinn is shown with his arms and hands in a prayer-like posture, while each arm has a bracer on the biceps and the right arm has a bracelet at the wrist. The djinn's head is bald and vaguely oriental, his ears are pointed, and he has a moustache and beard. Later runs will include a bottle from which the djinn is emerging, I understand. The figure is 35mm tall. The efreet looks considerably less servile, appearing with arms crossed and his tongue sticking out from between two fangs. His large, horned head is very demonlike. The figure is 39mm tall.

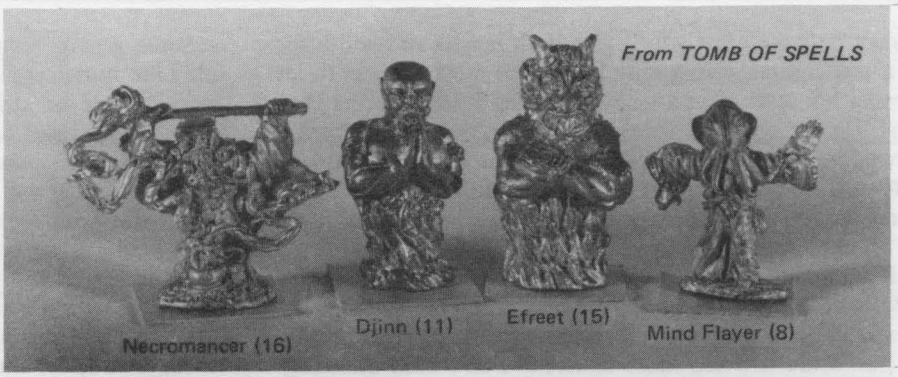
All the figures in this box so far were by Andrew L. Chernack. The last four were done by a "free-lance sculptor" who did not want to be identified. The first of these is the *Pseudo Dragon (12)*, a winged small dragon crouched down with its hands together. You can't be sure whether it is wringing its hands in worry or saying how delicious you look. I had some difficulty fastening the wings on my dragon, and had to deepen the holes the prongs fit into and glue the wings on at prong and tip. It is a pity that a better method of adding pieces to figures hasn't been found. I would have to rate the durability of the wings

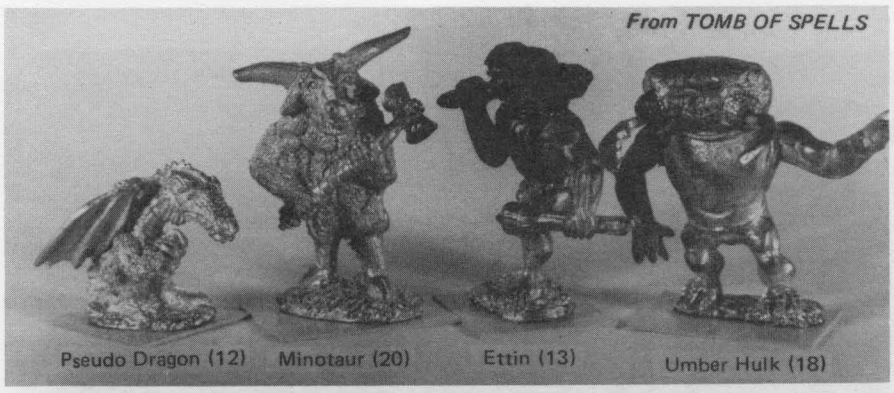


questionable, even after a good gluing – this figure will have to be carried with great care. The other problem is that this is not a good depiction of the monster as described in the *Monster Manual*, which puts them at a foot and a half long. This figure is 27mm tall and 38mm wide, which at the standard of 25mm= six feet is much too big. Grenadier promises a set of pseudo-dragons to scale (usable for Pernese fire lizards, too) later this year. In the meanwhile, this figure is quite usable as a small dragon, in the sense of being "only" 8-10 feet long.

The Ettin (13) is a two headed giant carrying a large, metal-bound club in each hand, one resting on a shoulder. The figure wears an animal skin Tarzan-style, and looks distinctly unfriendly. The figure is 44mm tall and 38mm wide, about the right size in scale.

The Umber Hulk (18) looks very much as it appears in the *D&D* books, a large humanoid insect creature with huge mandibles. This figure is designed so that the mandibles must be glued on by putting them into holes on either side of the face, which makes them subject to breakage rather easily. However, the figure can be used without the mandibles just as well. The figure is 42mm tall and 52mm wide.





The Minotaur (20) is a very fierce-looking beast, with a well-sculptured face, including eyes sculpted in. It grasps the traditional double-handed axe as it advances upon you. The axe itself is a massive piece with a counterweight on its opposite end, a nice touch; but I would have preferred a larger blade on the axe (the blade appears to have lost part of its edge in the mold on the one I got). I would also have thought that the large area under the right arm should have been free space instead of a filled-in area. These quibbles aside, it is an impressive figure, and should paint up well. The figure is 45mm tall.

Grenadier figures have been popular for a long time, primarily for the quality of their sculpture. They tend to be active-looking figures with fully featured faces – lips, noses, eyebrows, beards, mustaches, hairstyling of various sorts. Only the eyeballs tend to be missing, largely because of the difficulty of sculpting something that small on human-sized and smaller creatures; but those can be painted in. In addition, they have great attention paid to details of clothing, collars, jackets, trousers, belts and straps, buckles, hats and helmets, boots and shoes, and so on, which make the figures take on great individuality even within a group of related figures. This attention also extends to accessories carried by the figures – backpacks, pouches, waterskins, daggers, quivers, musical instruments, and the like. My only complaint on that is that I would like to see more of the Grenadier elves in heavier armor than leather, but you can always imagine chainmail hidden under their tunics. It may be that this will be taken care of in the pack of fighter figures that is to be released in the Spring of 1980.



Memoranda

With this issue, the price of *Different Worlds* is $2.50. More pages and inflation are the major causes. Now with more articles each issue we know you will agree that *Different Worlds* still give the best value for your money. Subcriptions are still the same rate and present subscribers will not be affected.

Also, in an attempt to catch up, the date on this issue have been moved up to April/May. Subsribers will still get the same number of issues.

QUICK PLUGS

DEEPDELVE — This is an adventure designing kit that can be played solo. It contains 30 encounters and 20 treasures on 3"x5" cards, four maps, and a twelve page instruction book. For a party of first through fourth level characters, designed by Clint Bigglestone, it sells for $5.95. *DEEPDELVE EXPANSION KIT ONE* — This kit contains 30 new encounters, 20 new treasures, and four new maps. Designed by Clint Bigglestone, it is priced at $3.95. The above are available from the Fantasy Factory, 386 Alcatraz, Oakland, CA 94618, postpaid, Calif. residents add appropriate 6% or 6½% sales tax.

ADVENTURES IN FANTASY — This is a new fantasy RPG by David L. Arneson and Richard Snider. It has three books about 50 pages each, three sheets of charts and tables, and a 20-sided die, all in a box. The first book, "Book of Adventure," contains rules on player characters, social status, education, price list, setting up a campaign, combat, experience, and non-player characters. The second book, "Book of Faerry and Magic," contains rules on magic, spells, sorcerous combat, faerry races, runes, and elementals. The third book, "Book of Creatures and Treasure," has rules on creatures, treasures, gemstones, magic items, and artifacts. Available for $20 postpaid from Excalibre Games, Inc., Box 29171, Brooklyn Ctr, MN 55429.

INTRUDER — This is a game for one or more players. An alien has infiltrated a spaceship. The players must get the monster before it eliminates them and takes over the ship. In the meantime, the monster is metamorphosizing into a more powerful being and occasionally dividing into two or more clones. The components include a 16 page rulebook, 17"x 22" map, and 54 counters. Designed by Dennis B. Sustare, the rules include four scenarios. Published by Task Force Games, it sells for $3.95 through retail outlets and mail order dealers.

ARES 1 — Premier issue of a new magazine of SF&F simulation, this 40 page issue features the game *WorldKiller*, a game of planetary assault. The game includes four pages of rules, 11"x16" map, and 100 counters. The game has standard and reinforcement scenarios, and the rules include special movement, combat, and units. Designed by Redmond A. Simonsen, the game is for two players. The rest of the magazine features much fiction, and review of SF&F films, television programs, games, and books. Edited by Redmond A. Simonsen, bimonthly, copy price of $3, subscription is $14 for six issues. Available from SPI, 257 Park Ave S, New York, NY 10010.

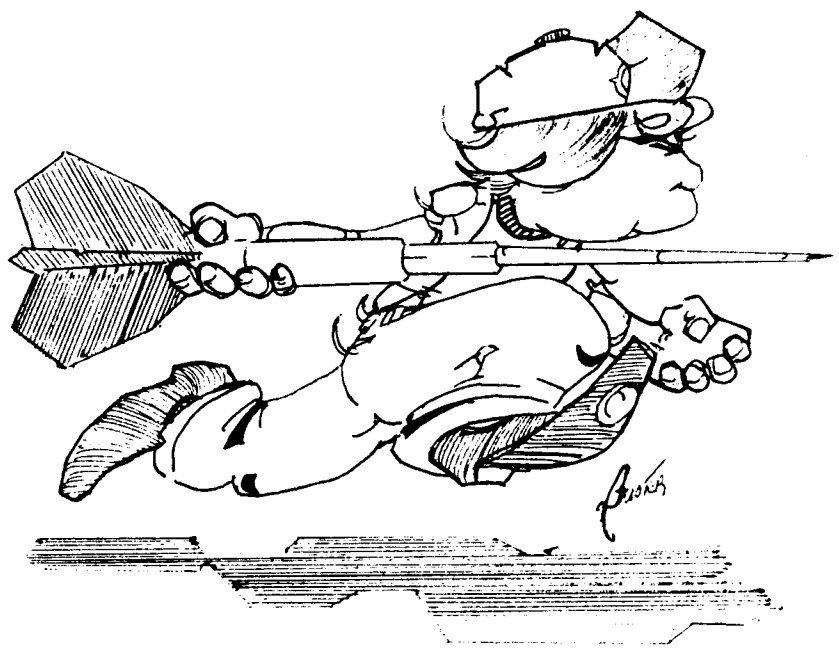
IN THE LABYRINTH — This is the first book in *The Fantasy Trip* RPG system. Designed by Steve Jackson, this 80 page book requires Metagaming's *Melee* and *Wizard* or future volumes of *TFT* for combat and magic. The system revolves around the world of Cidri and the rules include character creation, talents, creating a world, economic systems, duels, religions, adventuring, flora and fauna, magical creatures, examples, and play aids. Available from Metagaming, PO Box 15346, Austin, TX 78761 for $4.95 plus 50 cents postage.

TUNNELS & TROLLS BOXED SET — This recent package includes the *T&T* rulebook, the *Buffalo Castle* solitaire dungeon, *Dungeon of the Bear, Level 1*, 25 pre-rolled characters, three six-sided dice, and a pencil. All for $12.95. *ARENA OF KHAZAN* — This is their *T&T Solo Dungeon 12* by Ken St. Andre. Khazan is where adventurers go to fight for fame and reward or death. The adventure is 40 pages long and sells for $4. The above are available from Flying Buffalo, Inc., PO Box 1467, Scottsdale, AZ 85252, postpaid.

HELLPITS OF NIGHTFANG — This is an approved scenario for *RuneQuest*. Designed by Paul Jaquays, it is 32 pages long. Nightfang is the name of a male human vampire and Hellpits is the name for a trio of deep limestone sinkholes. There are 15 areas to explore with almost 50 character/monster stats. There is a special found item list and statistics for wolves. Sells for $3 from Judges Guild, 1165 N University Ave, Decatur, IL 62526, postpaid, Illinois residents add 5% sales tax.

DEMONS — This is a game of demonic conjuration for one to four players who play the roles of magicians questing after treasure in medieval Armenia. The game consists of a twelve page rulebook, 100 playing pieces, 8½"x11" map, and various play aids. Designed by James F. Dunnigan, the rules include conjuring demons and curses, magic ring of Solomon, discovery and seizure of treasure, capture and torture of magicians, and some historical notes. Now boxed for $5.95. *DEATHMAZE* — This is a game for one to six players each playing one or more adventurers exploring the depths of a horror-filled catacomb in pursuit of glory and gold. There is no map but the maze is built up section by section by use of the playing pieces. The components consist of a 16 page rulebook, 200 counters, and charts and tables sheets. Rules include creating a character, fountains, statues, trap doors, wandering monsters, evil heroes, treasure, wizards and magic, and character continuity. Designed by Greg Costikyan, it is available boxed for $5.95. The above games are available through SPI, 257 Park Ave S, New York, NY 10010, NY and NJ residents add appropriate sales tax.

ALL THE WORLDS' MONSTERS VOLUME III — Another in a series of collection of monsters for use with role-playing campaigns, this volume features 238 of them. Special features include an article on how to convert the monsters for use with *RuneQuest*, list of monsters by type, level, and locale, and a cumulative index to all volumes. Edited by Steve Perrin and Jeff Pimper, it is available for $9.95. *PANZER PRANKS* — This is a tactical simulation simulating simulations of WW II tactical tank warfare. The rules are mostly tongue-in-cheek but playable. The rules include glossary of sound effects, bathroom phase, and epilog. The ten scenarios include "Panzer Pits — Tank Warfare in the Qattara Depression, 1941," and "The German Counter-Offensive at Latrine—France 1944." Components include a 16 page rulebook, 8½"x11" map, and 100 counters. Designed by Kurt Lortz, it sells for $3.95. The above items are available postpaid from the Chaosium, Inc, PO Box 6302, Albany, CA 94706. Calif. residents add appropriate 6% or 6½% sales tax.



Commentary

SYSTEM SNOBBERY

By Larry DiTillio

The moon promised to be silvery full, my two most devoted campaign players had recently moved to San Francisco from Angel City, and in one week I managed to crank out a quickie article on sex fantasies that netted me $500. For these dubious reasons I decided to attend GrimCon 79 in Oakland, a 400 mile trek from my home base in LA. It is not GrimCon I intend to scribble about here, but rather certain happenings at GrimCon that set my brain-box in over-drive. For those of you who did not make it to GrimCon, I will say I had three highly satisfactory days of role-play, the people were all very nice and I'll probably try to make the next one, assuming my sex fantasies hold out.

I was somewhat late for the opening of GrimCon, about three hours in fact and when I did arrive the registration table had just closed down so they could compile lists of the people playing in official tournaments and such. Some people tend to holler a lot in such situations, I myself don't. I cultivated a lot of patience dealing with unemployment lines and welfare offices in my star-crossed salad days so a slight delay in signing up for a gamecon doesn't provoke me. While waiting to turn loose of my money I passed the time by reading over the scheduled convention events. Right off the balrog I noted an absence of certain game systems on the list, particularly *Dungeons & Dragons* and *Tunnels & Trolls*. The Tournament Dungeon was not categorized at all, but I later discovered it was *Arduin*, as were the majority of planned dungeons. Chaosium was running numerous *RuneQuest* adventures and there was mention of a new entry into the field called *The Endless Abyss* which I got no opportunity to participate in (it was scheduled for 8 a.m. Saturday morning and like most writers I drink and therefore abhor that hour). I was a bit surprised at the omission of *D&D* (and not too surprised at no *T&T*, since that seems to be an unfortunate circumstance at most conventions), however, it made sense when you consider that the con was under the auspices of the Multiversal Trading Company and Grimoire Games who are shall we say rivals in the FRP world with TSR Hobbies. Okay, my theory is whoever wants to do the mountain of work necessary to put on a convention should offer what they like, stressing any system they prefer. If you don't want *D&D, Traveller, Chivalry & Sorcery*, or *Bushido*, fine and dandy. As we used to say in New York, "it bes' that way sometimes." On the other hand, while hovering around the registeration desk the next day I overheard a startling piece of news. No one was signing up for official runs. I was wog-boggled by this, since at DunDraCon IV I never even got near an official run (other than my own). What was the matter with the 300 odd people attending? Were they all too chintzy to part with two bucks? I didn't know and the con honchos were in the dark as well. They were actually recruiting people for dungeons, even if you had already gotten your two bananas worth (with the single exception of the Elimination Tournament if you had already been eliminated). I popped my shaggy skull into the open gaming room, thinking that some sort of answer might lie therein. It was jumping, numerous games in progress at every table. What games? Well, mostly *D&D*. Aha! There was the ticket. Despite the emphasis of the con organizers on other systems, a whole horde of *D&D*ers were in attendance and it seemed logical to assume that if they couldn't plunk down $2 to play *D&D* then they'd stick to open gaming where they could. "System Snobbery" had struck and it left the good folk at GrimCon with plenty of prizes and no players. I might of course be wrong about this, and you're welcome to disagree, but not right now. I've got a few more trolls to tackle on this issue, so patience Pedro, the point is coming.

On the second day of the con I was in the dealer's room pow-wowing with some old acquaintances and I let drop that I was looking forward to running a dungeon at the next DunDraCon. "What sort of dungeon?" I was asked. "Oh, an *Advanced D&D* scenario," was my answer. This comment followed from a guy I really like, who should know better, "*AD&D*! I didn't think *D&D* could advance." Appreciative chuckles from his mates followed. I refrained from joining in. System snobbery creeps upon me on feet of squooshy clay. Suddenly I who am only interested in good RPGing find myself looked down upon for the system I use to provide that. Listen gang, I am an old hand at this. I got into FRP thru *T&T* and those of you who play it know what I mean. You go to a con, sit down to run a pleasant, little death-filled labyrinth and in a minute some eager face is asking if you have an opening. "Sure," you say, "but I should tell you we're playing *T&T*." "OH THAT!!" re-

plies the now-not-so-eager face, contempt as thick as iron icicles in his tone. Yes indeed, I know this well. AND IT STILL MAKES ME DAMN MAD! I told you my point was coming and with this incident in mind here it is: There is no perfect, best, or even better system of FRP. The attitude that there is has no foundation and what's more is harmful to the whole concept of FRP. At the very least it closes off minds to what is good in respective systems, while at the very worst it engenders incidents like this – at DunDraCon IV Steve Perrin invited me to run a *T&T* dungeon. This meant I lugged a horde of equipment from LA to San Francisco, did several weeks of refurbishing my dungeon and in general did my damnedest to ensure that those who kindly chose to play my game would be given their money's worth. The run was scheduled for Sunday at 7 p.m. and an hour before this a con rep came up to me and asked me why I had cancelled my dungeon. Well basilisks and bare bazooms I hadn't! Nevertheless someone at the convention had, scrawling CANCELLED across my sign-up sheet. There could be only one reason as I saw it. Some system snob had decided that it would be funny to ruin a game he did not like to play. It is unfortunate I never discovered this sucker's identity since I am very sure I could have changed his mind concerning what is funny. Once he regained consciousness. It will please you *T&T* buffs to know that I managed to salvage the run thru quick action and that it was great fun. Take That You Sicko System Snob! You see what I mean nevertheless about harm.

Now, what in the name of the etherial plane brings about system snobbery? Frankly Scarlatti, I don't know. I am aware of the feuds between designers, especially where a certain E. Gary is concerned and this might have a lot to do with it. Assuredly some of his ponderous assertions deserve vitriolic salvos in return, but it's more reasonable to vent your spleen on the man himself, rather than the game system he espouses. The same is true of every designer, their personal viewpoints must be separated from their creations.

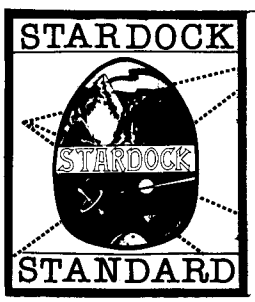
I have run through *D&D* dungeons, *T&T* adventures, *Arduin* mazes, and scenarios that are an amalgam of several systems. Some have been great, some have been capital B – boring, but never have I considered the system to be at fault, only the GM using it. A GM has to rely on his or her own imagination to bring life and color to a game, and not on any particular set of mechanics. Let me illustrate this by tipping my hat to the two best GMs I have ever played with. The first is Mr. Ken St. Andre, designer of *T&T*, and the second is Ms. Hillary Powers, whose "Jester's Palace" dungeon was a mind-blasting delight (even though I got to play only an hour in it, replacing a youngster who was forced to leave at DunDraCon IV). Ken naturally uses his own system and those of you who scoff at *T&T* should think twice if you ever have the chance to run with Ken. He is fiendish, clever, humorous, and resourseful and his dungeons reflect it. The fact that he rolls nothing but six-sided dice, or that his spells are written more simply than in other systems (aside from *RuneQuest*) has nothing to do with it. *T&T* works in his hands, because he knows how to play. Ms. Powers on the other hand employs a mixed system, incorporating elements of *D&D*, *Arduin*, and I believe *RuneQuest* as well, all augmented by the fact that she is a fighting lady of the SCA. Her personal choice of mechanics makes for a good game, not because it is inherently superior but solely because she happens to be fantastic role-playing GM. My short glimpse of her crazy, color-splashed universe sent me reeling and I'd fight a score of type 98 demons with a -5 cursed sword just to have a crack at a full run with her. What is more than obvious amidst all this lavish laurel-bestowing is that either of these two people will provide you with an enjoyable, rewarding RPG. NO MATTER WHAT SYSTEM THEY PREFER. What is less obvious is that in their FRP careers these two fine folk have been receptive to all systems, a way of thinking that is a sure cure for system snobbery. I give all thanks and praise to Steve Perrin for *RuneQuest*, to Dave Hargrave for *Arduin*, to Ken St. Andre for *T&T*, and yes to Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson for *D&D*. (There is no doubt I will be praising and thanking Ed Simbalist as well, whenever I get around to *Chivalry & Sorcery*.) I give them thanks and praise because I am a devoted FRP gamer and every one of their design has aided my personal world-building. I am not idiot enough to consider any of these games better than another. It just ain't so Joe. Each system has its high points, each has its drawbacks. None of



"I want a ring for my wife . . . preferably one with a curse *on it!"*

them is any good without an imaginative human being to play them. So what am I asking? I'm asking that those who design RPGs and those who play them stop knocking games they don't care to play because of personal prejudice or economic ego. There is room for everybody. I am not telling you to stop criticizing flaws in design, this is good and necessary. Rather I'm suggesting that blackballing an entire system because you don't like certain aspects of it is not criticism, its childish arrogance. I would like to see RPGing grow and thrive. It won't if potentially good GMs and players come to conventions and are made to feel that the game they are playing is for some arcane reason unworthy. Let's stop bickering about what set of melee rules is more realistic and strive to encourage more fantastic non-combat encounters. I like to hack away at dragonewts, wobras, and gelatinous cubes as much as anyone but I also enjoy trading banter as well as blows. Give me a two-headed talking goat who likes old jokes, a slinky sorceress with lust in her heart, or a mad monk smoking a hookah full of rainbows and I'm happy no matter what system you use. The concept of role-playing is such that nobody can nail down what is best or most preferable. We have to meld our systems, take in the entire spectrum and learn to play as many as our minds can absorb, even if we choose to GM just one. If you refuse then stop lashing people for their One True Way garbage. Your One True Way is just as false. So listen up crew, go out there and plunk down your shekels to support gaming and not ONE game. Give everything a shot, *Arduin, D&D, T&T, C&S, RQ*, or anything else. The broader your scope of role-play the better you'll play. Defeat system snobbery while you still can.



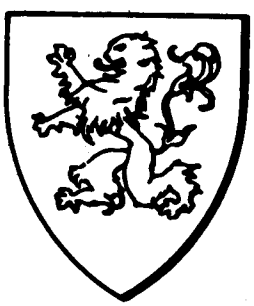


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Jeff Berry
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Minneapolis, MN 55409

August 2-3, 1980 ***Bangor Maine Area Wargamers Annual Convention***
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August 30, 31, September 1, 1980 ***PACIFICON***
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LETTER FROM GIGI

GOSSIP

Dear Tadashi,

I almost didn't get this letter off to you in time, since I was so busy with Disneyland's 25th anniversary. They even wanted me to wear my tiny Tinkerbell outfit and fly off the Matterhorn once for old times' sake. But I'm not as thin as I was, and that rope looked weak.

Well, my biggest news is that TIM KASK has resigned as editor of *The Dragon*! He's sold all his TSR stock and is looking for work with other publishers. Some sources report he had little future with TSR and that the break was amicable; others say the resignation was under "dubious circumstances." Hmm. With the stock sale and some severance pay, he and his family can survive for a few months. Good luck, Tim!

With no releases since GENCON, FGU is now ready for the '80's: TONY LeBOUTILLIER and GERALD SEYPURA's *Skull & Crossbones,* a pirates-of-the-Caribbean RPG, should be in the stores as you read this... FGU is releasing a revision of MARK RATNER's *Space Marines*...and *Odysseus* by MARSHALL ROSE should follow on its heels —it's roleplaying in ancient Greece and thereabouts. *C&S* fans will get samurai expansion rules, *Saracen & Crusader,* and *Archaeron* this year; while editing *C&S* material, ED SIMBALIST is also designing a science fiction RPG for initial release about GENCON '80... FGU central is now in a new warehouse and office on mysterious Long Island.

Bad news for bondage fans: SPI's *Dragonflayer* is now *Dragonslayer*.

Rumour says some Flying Buffalo people will be doing *RQ* supplements for Chaosium. What is this dissent I keep hearing about from Arizona?

LOU ZOCCHI now has all of the *Empire of the Petal Thrones* from TSR, and that is settled. Now M. A. R. BARKER can start creating again. Gigi would be most interested to hear the full story behind that exchange, as well as why MARB has not been much published for a long while.

ORIGINS '80 has shifted back to Widener University (Chester, PA). Understand that the Delaware officials were "unresponsive." If JAY HADLEY can find an air conditioner for me, I just might go.

Love and kisses to JEFF DILLOW for sending me the *High Fantasy* material.

Wasn't *Sorcerer's Apprentice's* Winter '79 cover supposed to have a red background?

The review copies of SPI's new fantasy/SF magazine *Ares* have gone out (though I had to get mine second-hand, and thanks a lot), which includes capsule reviews of many SF&F games. Omitted was *Tunnels & Trolls*, among others. And included was *Atlantis: 12,500 B.C.*! Well, I would be more inclined to guess that the reviewers limited themselves to the games they knew if some of the statements didn't belie the idea of such knowledge. And I note that some interested parties got rather high marks. What can this mean?

It's not true that IAN LIVINGSTONE has approached me for a *White Dwarf* interview, but I wish it was. He did GREG STAFFORD for issue 17.

Tyr Gamemakers' *Bushido* is reported to be now available from Phoenix Games.

Judges Guild is now licensed to do adventures for *Villians & Vigilantes.* And speaking of *V&V*, co-author JEFF DEE is full-time for TSR in their art department.

Ah, and speaking of TSR, they are deeply involved in financing the upcoming *D&D* movie, or so Rumour says. The script includes a scene in which a drug-crazed college student machine-guns police in the steam tunnels (of you-know-where, I guess) because he thinks they're orcs! Please, please, may this not be true—it sounds like crass exploitation. Well, I like trash as well as the next person, but I always hoped FRP-dom would be above that. Funny, isn't it, that the media alchemists only find ways of turning trash into gold?

Will somebody please write and tell me what "Big Tsimmis" means?

I guess the biggest tsimmi in LA is that a large drug store chain bought a huge load of *AD&D*s, and retailed each volume at $8.99 each. I understand that TSR's California rep knew nothing about it. He doesn't like surprises.

Best Wishes Dept.: Dimension Six Enterprises will be publishing something called the *Compleat Fantasist: How to Convet the Major Fantasy Role-Playing Systems to Each Other.* Anyone competent to do that will know that such a project cannot be finished to any reasonable degree of completeness, and enough said.

Sorry I couldn't make it to Chaosium Inc.'s incorporation party—I'll have to wait to solve the ROSE CHUN puzzle another time.

At GDW, everyone is spaced-out. Upcoming is *Dark Nebula* (which uses the *Imperium* game system and an astromorphic map), a boxed *Mayday*, and *Traveller* scenarios *Research Station Gamma* and *Shadows/Annic Nova* (the latter a double scenario). Have those tight-wads sent you any review copies yet? It costs me a lot of money to write these letters, you know.

Speaking of late news, whatever happened to *Wyrm's Footnotes 8*, sweetheart?

Since selling *The Space Gamer*, Metagaming will no longer discount their products to *TSG* subscribers. Hmmph!

TSR is publishing the *AD&D Companion* in time for GENCON '80. This will be a collection of *D&D* and *AD&D* variants! My trembling fingers can hardly type this, Tadashi—is there no longer One True Way?

Love,

Gigi

Dragonslayer



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Oriental Weapons for RuneQuest

By Sean Summers
with editing and additional material by Steve Perrin



Sean Summers is a well-known Texas FRPer who runs a unique seaborne RuneQuest *campaign based on Japanese and AmerIndian cultures.*

This article is on the use of Oriental weaponry in *RuneQuest*, based on some of the weapon rules that I have been using in my Oriental/AmerIndian campaign.

I have done a good deal of research on these weapons. I am also a student of the martial arts of Aikido and Ninjitsu. I lean toward the traditional Japanese/Okinawan axis in eastern weapons training. There are some Chinese weapons I know so little about that I could say nothing of their use. Other weapons of the Orient are so rare that they should best be left for special referee inclusion, perhaps for followers of a weapons god.

The advantages and disadvantages of these weapons as shown are related to my prejudices. I favor the staff, thinking it a superior weapon. I also think highly of the sai, kusarigama, naginada, etc. Everyone will have their own personal feelings on this, but overall I think you will find the following description are fairly balanced.

There are some weapons listed here that seem similar to western counterparts, but are rated differently. The techniques and styles of using them are radically different from the European model. The Oriental spear, for instance, is wielded very differently from the western variety.

Certain weapons were used in the Orient that I view as not very different from the *RuneQuest* weapons as they now exist. These are axes, halberds (poleaxes), maces, mauls, daggers, javelins, and other common weapons.

USE OF THE WEAPONS

The attack, parry, and disarm (see below) percentages given for these Oriental weapons are meant for characters in an Oriental campaign, for those who "invent" the weapons in a non-Oriental campaign, or those who are allowed to start out with them as a cultural weapon. Of course, a referee can incalcate them directly into any campaign, and all the percentages would apply.

Any character picking up one of these weapons with no experience in his culture and no tutor would start out at the basic 5%.

THE DISARM

In this writeup I have added a weapon ability which I feel is appropriate for certain Oriental weapons. This is the disarm.

ORIENTAL WEAPONS STATISTIC TABLE

Type	*Name*	*STR Required*	*DEX Required*	*Damage*	*HP*	*Cost*	*ENC*	*Length (meters)*	*SR*	*Basic Attack*	*Basic Parry*	*Basic Disarm*	*Training Costs 05-25*	*30-50*	*55-75*
Thrusting	Yari	8	8	1D12+1	15	30	3	2.0	0	20	20	–	200	400	800
	Kama	–	9	1D6+1	15	50	1	0.3-0.7	3	15	20	10	200	400	800
	Sai	–	10	1D6+1	20	75	1	0.5-0.8	3	15	25	10	200	700	1500
Cutting/Slashing	Daito	9	9	1D10+1	20	150	2	1.0-1.5	2	10	15	–	400	800	1400
	Katana	8	8	1D10	20	100	1	0.6-1.0	3	10	15	–	300	600	1200
	Naginada	11	9	2D8	15	75	3	2.5+	0	15	15	–	300	700	1500
	Wakizashi	–	–	1D6+1	20	40	1	0.5	3	15	15	–	100	200	500
Concussion/Smashing	Bo Staff	7	–	1D10+1	15	10	2	1.5-2.0+	0	20	20	5	300	600	1200
	Bokken	8	7	1D8	15	40	1	0.6-1.0	3	10	15	–	300	600	1200
	Escrima Sticks	–	7	1D4+1	15	15	0	0.3-0.5	4	15	25	5	200	500	1000
	Jitte	–	–	1D6	20	50	1	0.5-0.9	3	20	20	10	100	400	800
	Jo Staff	–	–	2D4+1	15	10	2	1.0-1.5	2	20	20	5	200	500	1000
	Nunchuck	–	9	1D6+2	15	60	1	0.4-1.0	3	15	10	–	300	800	1600
	Tessin	–	–	1D4+1	20	50	0	0.2	4	10	20	5	100	300	700
	Three-Section-Staff	–	9	1D8	15	75	1	1.0-2.0	3	10	15	5	400	800	1600
	Tonfa	–	8	1D6+1	15	25	1	0.5-1.0	3	20	25	5	200	500	1200
Chain Weapons	Kusarigama	9	11	1D10	20	100	2	0.5-2.0	2	10	10	10	500	800	2000
	Manrikigusari	10	12	1D10	20	60	1	1.0-2.0	3	5	10	5	500	800	2000
								Range	*Rate*						
Missile Weapons	Long Bow	10	10	1D8+1	12	150	2	100	5/MR	20	–	–	400	800	1600
	Shuriken Star	–	–	1D4+1	–	2	0	20	1/MR	25	–	–	200	500	1000
	Shuriken Dart	–	–	1D6	–	1	0	20	5/MR	25	–	–	200	500	1000

This is a skill that was and is taught with some weapons. I use it to try and make some of the smaller, less damaging weapons more attractive to the characters. If one of these weapons is used in a successful parry, a disarm attempt may be rolled. A successful roll flicks the weapon from the grasp of the attacker. Use the applicable rules in the *RQ* fumble tables to determine direction and distance the weapon travels.

Increase in the disarm ability is gained by experience only.

WEAPON HIT POINTS

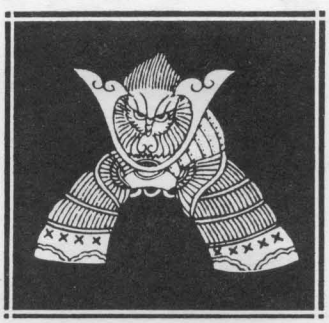
In the use of weapon hit points I have deferred to the established *RQ* system. However, there are many records of staff wielders breaking samurai swords. The trick is to parry the blow, catch it in the wood, then give it the right twist to snap the blade. For my campaign, I use a wood chart, with certain woods yielding up more hit points to the weapons made from them. One of the adventures people have gone on in my campaign was to find the fabled flame trees in the heart of the jumble for wood to make staves and spear hafts, tonga, and escrima sticks. *(ED NOTE: This can easily apply to regular* RQ.*)*

CHAIN AND OTHER FLEXIBLE WEAPONS

Chain weapons are by their nature deadly and dangerous to both user and target. An opponent's parry against such a weapon should be cut to ½, as they can curl around the opponent or his parry to strike the back. However, they require a great deal of dexterity to use and are conducive to fumbling. The flexible weapons, nunchucks, and three-section-staff, have a double fumble. Thus, someone knowing nunchucks at 60% would have a fumble at a roll of 97+ on D100, rather than the normal 99+. *(ED NOTE: This could apply to* RQ *flails.)*

The chain weapons, kusaigama and manrikigusari, have a tripled fumble percentage. Thus, a character who is 60% with one of these weapons has a fumble of 95+, rather than 99+. *(ED NOTE: This could apply to* RQ *morning stars.)* Even Bruce Lee hit himself with his nunchucks.





COMMON USAGE

The major weapons taught to warriors who would fight in mass (such as *RQ* mercenaries) were the swords, the spear, and the long bow. The naginada was well favored on the battlefield, but required lots of room. The other weapons were more oriented towards the personal challenge and combat.

(ED NOTE: Those wishing to run an "authentic" samurai period campaign should also be aware that such weapons as the various sticks, nunchucks, and other martial arts weapons were developed in the very late 19th century and early 20th when the Okinawans needed weapons which didn't look like weapons.)

ORIENTAL WEAPONS DESCRIPTIONS

BO STAFF – A long staff that uses both circular and poking attacks. A fairly strong weapon of individual combat, it requires that a certain distance be kept between attacker and opponent for completely effective use.

BOKKEN – The wooden sword. Beginning as a practice sword, this weapon was actually used by some masters in preference to the katana on occasions. The techniques for this weapon are those of the katana but it has no edge, being a blunt weapon. The battle magic spell Bludgeon can be used on it. Any experience gained through use of the bokken is applicable to the katana, and vice versa. They are essentially interchangeable. The bokken is easier to make, cheaper, and safer for duels.

DAITO – A longer version of the katana, this sword was usually carried over the shoulder and drawn directly from this position.

ESCRIMA STICKS – A pair of short sticks used in combination. Highly mobile with a strong parry. Easy to carry, and inconspicuous.

JITTE – A metal truncheon with a single hook, it is somewhat similar to a sai. It is very useful in parrying and disarming. It is easier to learn than the sai and was a popular policing weapon. It is used one at a time.

JO STAFF – A development of the bo staff, the jo is shorter, usually around four feet long. It allows the fighter to get closer to the opponent. It is easy to conceal as a simple walking staff. The jo is easier to manipulate than the bo.

KAMA – A scythe blade or short sword set at right angles to a short wooden handle. This weapon had a powerful parry with its hooking motion. It can impale and has a disarm chance. The main disadvantage was its short length. Kamas were sometimes used in pairs.

KATANA – The well known curved single edged Japanese sword used by samurais. It is usually wielded in both hands, though it can be used in only one. Carried blade-edge up, thrust through a sash for quick draw.

KUSARIGAMA – A kama connected by the end of the handle to a chain one to five yards long, with a weight on the end. The chain could be used as a retrievable missile, or swung in front of the wielder. The chain could entangle and disarm with the kama being used for close in work, and the kill. This weapon combines the benefits of the kama and the manrikigusari. You can both attack and parry with either of these parts of the weapon. The chain does more damage but does not parry as well, and is difficult to use in close. The kama does parry well in close. When used in the kama-mode, the damage is 1D6 and basic parry is 10%.

LONG BOW – The Japanese long bow is an asymetrical bow with the top section much longer than the bottom. The bow can be fired from horseback at its regular percentage as training in the bow allows and includes this aspect. The bow is made just like a normal composition bow.

MANRIKIGUSARI – Developed by a castle guard at the Imperial Court where swords were forbidden. This weapon is simply a yard long or greater length of chain with weights at each end. It is swung in intricate patterns in front of and around the user. Both ends of the chain may be swung at the same time.

NAGINADA – The sword-spear. a two to three foot blade on a four to six foot shaft. This weapon was used mainly for slashing outside attacks and is very impressive when whirled about at high speeds. The weight and area needed to wield this weapon was the naginada's main disadvantage. Samurai women were often trained to use this weapon for defense of the home.

NUNCHUCKS – Two identical sticks of wood connected by a small length of cord or chain. The popular Kung Fu film weapon. It is very quick, very impressive, but is not terribly good at parrying. Usually only one is used.

SAI – A short metal trident, averaging 1½ feet, weighing from one to three pounds. Composed of a central shaft with a hook on each side, this weapon required great manual dexterity as it was flipped back and forth in its use. The sai's parry is very strong and it does disarm. A pair of sais were most often used. The sai is both a bludgeoning and thrusting weapon, and can impale. It has no edge, just a point. The battle magic spell Bludgeon can be used on the sai, but does not apply to the impale percentage. In the statement of intent phase the player must specify whether the character is thrusting (for possible impale) or smashing (for use of the Bludgeon spell).

SURIKEN – There are two forms of shuriken, the familiar star shuriken, with its four to eight blades, and the dart shuriken, a spike carried in the palm, parallel to the fingers and flung overhand. Dart shurikens do more damage, but several star shurikens may be thrown at once. With shuriken throwing ability at 50%, two may be thrown. At 75% ability, three may be thrown. At 100%, four may be cast. If more than one shuriken is thrown, multiply the number thrown by 10% and subtract this from the regular attack % to find out the actual chance each shuriken has of hitting an opponent. Each shuriken is rolled for and targeted separately.

TESSIN – A short metal ribbed fan or fan shaped block of metal, usually used by officials and those of good families. This was an inconspicuous weapon that could be carried anywhere in any situation, so that the owner was not completely defenseless. It was primarily a defensive weapon.

THREE-SECTION-STAFF – Three identical sticks of wood connected by small lengths of chain or cord. It is not as fast as nunchucks nor deft. It has a very good parrying ability, especially against shorter weapons. It is usually grasped on the inside portions of the outer two sticks.

TONFA – A stick or club with a perpendicular handle near one end, used to block (with the side), punch (long or short end), or rotated in the hand and flipped at the opponent. It has a very good parry and is usually used in pairs.

WAKIZASHI – The Japanese short sword. Usually carried in tandem with the katana. Usually this was a secondary slashing weapon.

YARI – The Japanese spear. Length varied for this spear, but all sizes were used two-handed. Many styles of fighting with this existed. Most used circular attacks, quarterstaff moves and butt strikes as well as the thrust. A major weapon of the soldiery.



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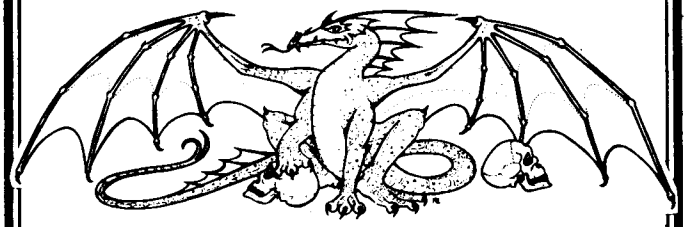
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DIFFERENT VIEWS

COMMENTS ON ISSUE 5

Dear Tadashi,

I feel that it is about time that I wrote a letter to your magazine. In my opionion it is the best, most informative, and most useful prozine around. This is not to say that you couldn't use improvement. I know that *DW* is young and growing, and I hope that through this letter I can improve its quality somewhat. So here is a review of *DW 5*.

Unlike your other covers, this one appealed to me. The artwork on the inside is better. All I can say is that you should keep trying to find new artists.

The thing that immediately struck me about *DW 5* is that it was brimming with ads, which didn't please me one bit. I would hate to see your magazine become like the *White Dwarf*, which is 50% advertisements. To make matter worse you added "Quick Plugs" and "Board Games," which, in addition to being rather outdated, was not of great interest to me. I don't think that you should get rid of it, just keep it at one page and cut down on the other ads. I might add that the ads themselves were of very high quality, and I was so impressed that I ordered a number of products.

The *Arduin* review was excellent, unlike the one given in the *White Dwarf*. I think that Mike speaks for all of us in his review (or at least me) and I hope to hear more from him in *DW*.

You are beginning to push it with the charts and tables; they can be the bane of any campaign and inhibit the GM's imagination. The majority of charts and tables are useless, and a table for character appearance is a good example of one. What is to stop a player from deciding whether his character has a beard or not? Come on!

"My Life and Role-Playing" is your best article and I'm surprised to see that you have managed to drag it along for so long. It is an excellent idea and should be continued as long possible. Your magazine approaches being as personal as an APA due to this feature and your letters section, which is probably one of the major reasons of its success.

The encounter charts (one of the few useful kinds of charts that exist, even though I abstain from using them) would have been very nice had they been done well, but they were really pretty bad and not much thought seemed to have gone into them.

Lastly, I would like to say that I think Gigi D'Arn is getting a bit obnoxious and rude. The tidbits here too are a bit old, and a lot of them need some sort of evidence if I were to believe them, but I think that this feature should stay pretty much as is, except that someone should give Gigi some tranquilizers.



Overall, I think that your magazine has a bright future, and my only real complaint is that there are too many ads. I should also add that your choice not to comment on these letters was extremely wise, having seen *The Dragon*'s "Out on a Limb." Keep up the good work.

Mike Troutman
Monterey, CA

Dear Tadashi,

Your mistake is letting Mr. Sapienza write those long articles for you. His "Cleric Cure System" (in *DW 3*) was inspiring, but his more recent articles ruin the magazine. Nothing he does is any better than mediocre and letting him do the feature article is using up space and keeping better things out. I am not a charts & tables freak: they just take up too much room.

Ken Hughes
Ann Arbor, MI

Dear Sirs:

I'd like to mention two things that I notice as an overtone in every issue. The thing I like most, and notice in every issue, is that you spend almost 50% of your space on role-playing as an art; how it should relate to every game on the market. Everyone says, "Well I play this RPG, or that RPG," but no one can ever explain what they mean by RPG except by describing their own personal game. Role-playing gaming is a new form of art and entertainment that is being greatly refined in our own time. You are the first magazine that I have ever seen that takes a serious look at role-playing without using your own games to explain it; after all, every RPG is not based on the fantasy of swords and sorcery. Now the thing I like least about your magazine is that in issue one you mentioned that you would cover all aspects of RPGing, and to an extent you have; but when it comes to individual games I think you have fallen far short of your stated goal. Sure you did an article or two on some off the wall games, good games but still off the wall, but these articles were mainly in the form of a review. For individual games your articles have all been on games in the S&S mythos (mainly *AG*, *D&D*, and *RQ*).

In *DW 5*, "Developing a Character's Appearance" is another simply beautiful article, the more you have on your character, the more easier it is to breath some life into your character and your game, send more like it. "My Life & Role-Playing" is still fresh. "Encounter Systems" is another fine Lortz article on improving and understanding your game. "Clippings" is something new again, it lets us know that we are growing, now if only we could get some true articles on the presses.

In closing, I'd just like to say that you are doing a great job. Keep the role-playing aspect of gaming in every issue.

David A. Kraklow
Illinois City, IL

Dear Tadashi:

The covers of your recent issues all feature fine artwork; indeed, the artwork is a major area of strength of the zine. I agree that Tom

Clark deserves further exposure, and Paul Jaquays is one of the better fantasy artists working. Patrick Jenkins' work is fine, indeed, the other appear OK too, except (in my humble opinion) Mel Laybourn does fine weapons and his style lends itself to misproportioned monsters, but the same applies to his (somewhat grotesque) humans, which are nicely detailed, but I'd prefer someone else–for example, the *DW 3 "Bushido"* review illustration was an interesting monster, but although oriental in motif, certainly didn't seem like an appropriate Japanese one.

DW 5 seems to indicate that your advertising is picking up; I think it would be very nice if certain of the advertising company's games is reviewed, to gain a bit more perspective and definition of the rules (I never buy anything sight-unseen these days). Gunderloy gave an interesting review of *Arduin*; properly complete too. Yet another complete set of tables by John Sapienza. I do wish he'd done a bit more research (what with the Library of Congress in town, for starters) on his armor weights. It also seems to me that the various Chaosium/SCA people should have precise data on actual equipment rather than having to use the various "guesstimates" that I keep seeing in print. "Gateway" is more proper for *DW*, although it does seem as though *DW* is going to be "stuck" with being the primary source of *RQ* variants; unfortunately there wasn't anything useful in the whole article (except *RQ* seems to work better as a depiction of classical Greek/Iliad combat than medieval). Steven Lortz's "Encounter Systems" wasn't nearly as complete as it could have been; on the other hand, the comparison of several of the current systems (so why not include *RQ*? *AD&D*?) was interesting and provided more food for thought than he usually does. The trend in *A&E* to examine various game mechanics is very valid (one reason John Sapienza's columns are so interesting) and is something I think designers, GMs, and players everywhere can benefit from; by all means encourage Mr. Lortz towards more research and discussion along these lines. The *Gamma World* article points out what a highly qualified designer feels to be a flaw in a RPG and presented concise usable solutions. More! The J. D. Egbert story also got publicity locally in newpapers, with some considerable garbling concerning what *D&D* actually is. The data on the situation is interesting; on the other hand, I greatly feel that you could have succinctly written a column summing up the whole thing, without having to waste an entire page; you can't be that hard up for material!

As to greater amount of pages devoted to ads, I realize ads help pay for the freight, but when over 20% is such,when I paid to read articles and see artwork, then I foresee a trend that will eventually doom your zine. Titles, new products, awards, and the like tend to also be merely filler/plugs for new goodies and even a number of letters deal with some of the same topics (Gigi too); which amounts to a trend that isn't quite so good. I realize good articles are tough to find, and are likely to get even more difficult (*TSG* articles being a case in point; the majority were obviously written to get something in print, not carefully thought out and lovingly crafted) in the future.

Mark Goldberg
Chicago, IL

Gentlemen,

I have enjoyed *DW* very much and found the approach of *DW* to role-playing with heavy emphasis on FRP rather than the technical aspects of gaming to be quite interesting.

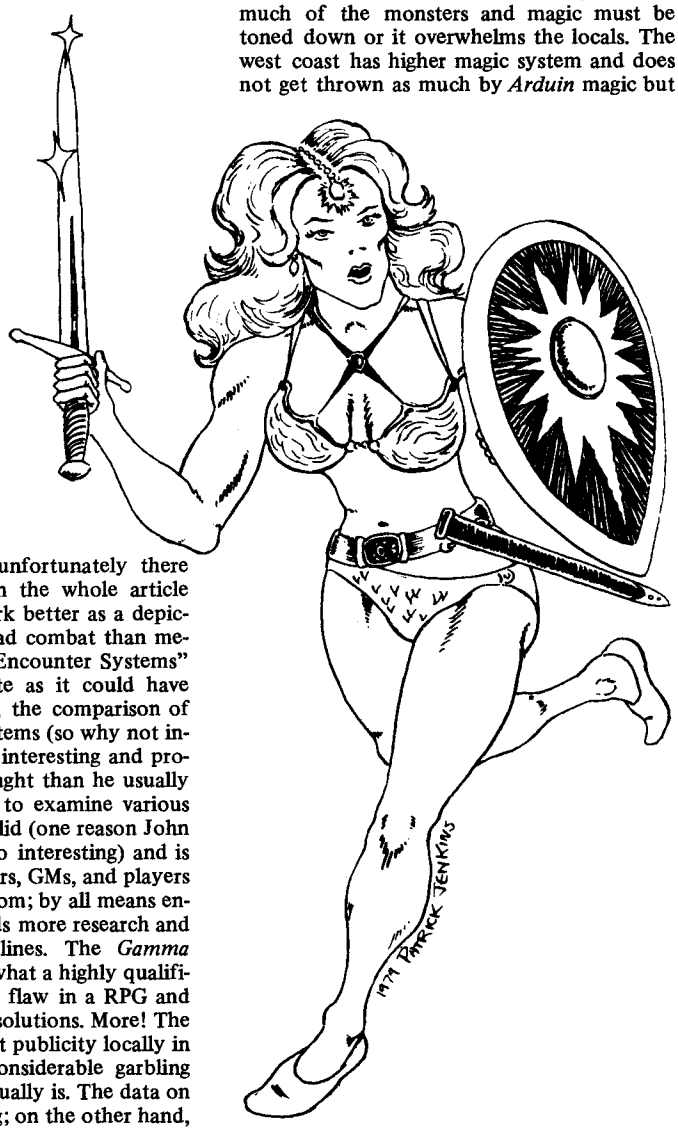
I have used *Arduin* in may own system so I know what Mike Gunderloy is talking about. I found it makes for ideal combat system but much of the monsters and magic must be toned down or it overwhelms the locals. The west coast has higher magic system and does not get thrown as much by *Arduin* magic but the locals down here would either abuse it or be overwhelmed. But I have found Dave Hargrave's ideals outstanding and very useful.

John Sapienza is another good source of unlimited ideas and useful material. It is so nice to see things you can use and understand appearing in a RPGing zine.

Steve Lortz's "Encounter Systems" is excellent and also useful, fully understandable. I wish certain other zines would get the idea about making their material clear and useful. I never have that problem with material presented in *DW*.

I hope nobody is upset by that unfortunate boy, the computer genius, who had some personal problems and disappeared. The bad part was the papers wrote yellow journalism articles accousting *D&D* of being a wierd cult that had done something terrible to the boy. The boy had problems of his own and they had nothing to do with *D&D*. Later the private detective cleared up the matter but it was too bad that some papers were so anxious to make a sale that they wrote up wierd cult articles about *D&D*.

M. R. Gemignani
Ft. Lauderdale, FL



VARDY COMBAT SYSTEM UPDATE

Dear Tadashi,

After the first part of the combat system article in *DW 6* was finished, I took another look at the weights given for the lighter armor types, and decided they had been overweighted when compared with the research figures I had used for my *DW 5* encumbrance article. The revised weight figures are given in the Armor Table, which also gives Armor Class and Armor Number figures for convenience (Basic System; adjust as described in the article for use with the parry rules). The strength figures given for each type of armor are what is required to wear that armor and move on foot at the speed stated in my *DW 5* article. Anyone wearing armor over their strength rating loses one movement step per point of strength they are below the figure given on the table. The figure given for Riding Plate is for wearing it and moving on foot, since while on horseback you depend upon the carrying capacity of the mount rather than your own strength for movement. But even a character with high strength may decide against wearing Riding Plate for walking trips in favor of being able to carry extra equipment, instead of incurring the extra 10% of body weight cost of the heavier armor. Scale armor has a greater encumbrance than other armor of equivalent rating because it is not only metal but very stiff. It still offers greater protection against some types of weapons, and carries a higher social prestige, than cuirboilli. It is also cheaper and easier to obtain than chainmail or plate armor.

I have been asked why I didn't make the base to-hit figures different for the different character classes, the way TSR did in the *AD&D* rules, when I did the attack tables for this system. I wasn't convinced it was necessary, being used to everybody starting out equal at first level. However, it certainly is not unreasonable for the classes to be divided according to the degree of combat training they receive, and if you feel this would add greater realism to your campaign try this method: Use the tables as given, but make clerics and thieves -5% to hit, and make mages -10% to

ARMOR TABLE

Armor Type	*AC*	*AN*	*% Body*	*Wt. Strength*
Clothing	9	10	5%	–
Padding	8	11	10%	–
Leather	7	12	15%	7
Cuirboilli	6	13	20%	9
Ringmail	6	13	20%	9
Light Scale	6	13	25%	11
Chainmail	5	14	25%	11
Heavy Scale	5	14	30%	12
Half Plate	4	15	35%	13
Full Plate	3	16	40%	14
Riding Plate	2	17	50%	16

hit (the same as treating them as if they were using -1 and -2 weapons, respectively), leaving fighters as they are.

A similar approach can be applied to weapons expertise. Use the figures as given on the attack tables only with the character's chosen weapons, but at -10% to hit (-2) with anything else. Fighters would be trained in the use of three weapons (four if intelligent 14+), clerics and thieves in two weapons (three in intelligent 14+), and mages only with the dagger (and thrown dagger if strength and dexterity are suitable). These are what you learn to use skillfully, and with anything else you fight at a lesser skill.

John T. Sapienza, Jr.
Washington, DC

NOTES ON ARDUIN REVIEW

Dear Tadashi;

To begin with, I'd like to say that I think your publication has become a major force in FRP field and stands to become so in the more conventional game field as well. The fears that I originally had about you becoming a "House Organ" have been put to rest, I suspect forever, by your consistant high quality and adherence to impartiality. Three cheers for you all!

On now to the article in question, I would like to expand what Mike Gunderloy said in his *Arduin* review beginning with comments on artwork.

I have always tried to help struggling artists to get a foothold in the genre by paying top dollar (over $1500 on artwork to date!), by giving everyone a chance. My current artist is Greg Espinosa. His artwork is at times as good as any I've seen anywhere, and I do include "the pros" when I say that. Greg is a "pro" now as well, and his published portfolio has helped him immeasurably, and will continue to do so. My compatriots at Grimoire Games have just signed him up for a $300 -$400 job based on his work for me in the past. Artwork is part and parcel of any "good" FRP game/rules, and I intend to push our standards even higher.

Caliban is not our only "module" on the market, we also have *Howling Tower* and *Citadel of Thunder*. Our latest effor is *Death Heart* (a combined overland/dungeon adventure). We also have nine game projects coming up in the next year, so look for us to be all over the place, all of the time!

I will take issue with the comment Mike made that *Arduin* is not a second generation game and simply reply that these rules were written as an improvement and carrying forward to the first generation *D&D* rules, and as such are second generation in concept and execution of play.

I will also take issue with his comment that "the trilogy will not be of much use to you unless you like this style" and simply comment that he later contradicts himself by telling people to "take what they want and leave the rest." An obvious indication that every one can find something of use, with or without modification, is simply that the rules are designed to be used piece meal as well as in their entirety. On the other hand, I really can't fault Mike for anything that he has said, for two very good reasons. The first being that he is obviously a "fan" of mine and *Arduin*, and as such, his article is generally quite complimentary to my work, and I'd be stupid to "attack" someone such as that, and secondly, by his standard of viewpoint, he is right in all that he has said. After all, it is divergent opinions that spawned my work in the first place, so who am I to kick when someone sees my work differently than I do? At any rate I will say what I feel, and you will know that I appreciate all that he had to say as well. I'm not stupid enough to think that I know all there is to know about the subject, nor am I asinine enough to think that other opinions of my work don't have merit. Because it has been just those opinion which I have constantly asked for that have helped me to produce better and more playable rules. The people are the final arbitrators in the market place, and those who do not listen to them will, the end, be abandoned by them.

I will also mention that in my work I do tell people that, generally speaking, each spell costs one point per level to use. So the comment that spell points/mana cost is not given is not correct in the strictest sense. I did not give the specific cost for one very good reason: almost everyone I know or have read about (in *A&E, DW*, etc.) use their own system or a modification of someone else's system for magik. So by not giving spell points/mana cost I leave it up to each individual as to what system they will use, and do not saddle them with one more "one true way."

The accuracy of my combat/weapons system is based on 20 years of research in places as divergent as the University of Munich in Germany, to the battlefields of Vietnam, to the tourney fields of the Society of Creative Anachronism. I have probably read some 10,000 books or more on the subject of warfare in all of its contexts, and have at one time or another been involved in Kendo, Kung Fu, Tae Kwan Do, and Judo, and have used weaponry ranging from boar spears to katanas to flamethrowers to C-4 plastique. I do know what I write about, a fact which seems to escape many of my competitors who apparently do not.

I think tha I am most proud of my demon lore and worked hard to perfect it for my game, in fact I think that I must agree with Mike when he says that they are "the best set" of those kinds of rules around.

The *Arduin* system grew out of need and expanded out of a natural growth, so as Mike says, there are some omissions and a couple of mistakes, most of which we are rectifying as fast as we can. All of the volumes have tables of contents now, and the spelling and other grammatical errors are being cleaned up each reprinting. We will be rewriting the entire three books so that we can put it out under two covers as *Advanced Arduin* and as *Basic Arduin* with all of the sections now scattered about regrouped into a coherent series of chapters with a reasonably easy line of logical progression. The three original volumes will remain in print for collectors and the purists, and will in no way be negated as a playing system.

I have finished producing rules booklets for the *Arduin Trilogy* (it wouldn't be a trilogy then, now would it?!), but will publish next an 8½"x11" color cover format book called, tentatively, *Arduin, Bloody Arduin* that will contain all of my modifications and additions to my own rules, and which are currently in play in my game. You see, even I can change how I feel about certain rules, even if I wrote them to begin with! At any rate, it will not be an "official" new rules book, just a "supplement" for all of those people who keep screaming at me to give them more.

One final comment and I'll close, but before that I'd simply like to say: Thank you Mr. Gunderloy for a highly entertaining, informative, and enjoyable article on my work.

Fantasy role-playing as a way of life has finally become rooted in the American way of life, and as a lifestyle it brings immense rewards to its practitioners, more so than many others so called "alternatives" that come to mind. I am very proud to have been even a small part of its beginning, and will strive to live up to its potential for good in the future. My best to you all.

David A. Hargrave
Concord, CA

MY WORLD AND WELCOME TO IT

Dear Tadashi,

Your magazine has helped me build a better framework for my world. It's beginning to have real shape and substance. I take a little from here, a little from there, a lot from my own creation, and mix well. What fits, fits and is kept. What doesn't is evident quickly and is either discarded or remolded.

The articles of game planning ideas are of tremendous help and I'd like to encourage all who've heard and read FRP gaming but have not had a chance to play to go ahead and take the plunge! It might not be the best or easiest way to build a FRP group but it can be done. I've done it! And we're having a great time! Building a world is work but a lot of fun!

One of the beauties of FRP gaming is that the rules are made for adoptation it's up to the GM. We started out calling what we do *D&D* but its become something else. For instance, our dragons are only like those of Pern (haven't found any yet but we know they're there). Now there are serpentine beasts here which could be considered dragons in some worlds but they aren't true dragons–they're not nice people either!

Linda Hill
Canon Cy, CO

ONCE MORE WITH FEELING

Dear Tadashi:

I am, of course, writing in rebuttal (well, partial rebuttal) to the points made by John Sapienza in his "Different View" published in issue 5 of *DW*.

John is a well-known writer on the subject of FRP gaming and is probably an excellent GM as well as player. My article was patently not aimed at such experienced persons as him.

Those of us who have been around for a while have evolved our own styles of play and have long-since determined the extent to which we wish to involve ourselves with our characters. Our emotions have centered where we feel most comfortable in the game.

However, most of the RPGers which I meet in public (i.e., at conventions) and private play are still searching for such a balance, they are the individuals that my article was aimed. Such people all-too-easily fall into the trap of over-identifying with their characters and too many of them cannot handle death or life-change.

There is very deep danger here. If, as John claims, RPGing is "psychodrama," then this converts the GM into a sort of "encounter-group" leader. This is heavy and heady stuff. I, for one, do not think that I am qualified for such a role, although I have had to adopt it a few times. I have seen, and been involved in, a few situations where players couldn't handle what was happening to their character/themselves.

You can be deeply involved in the game without being emotionally immersed in your characters. What is necessary is a GM who is willing to take the time and trouble to make it interesting. Without that, no amount of emotional involvement will help, any more than actual emotional involvement will perk up your own daily life in the face of a boring reality. Sure, you should hurt a little if your characters die, lose a limb, etc., but not so that it warps your own day-to-day reality. If John thinks it can't happen, it's only because he hasn't seen it happen. I have.

With regard to John's contention that "players should select their characters' personalities with a view to playing someone different from themselves, but within their own vision.": granting that this may be so, then how does a GM role-play his villains? For instance, I'm a gentleman (just ask me), although a bit hard-nosed. By John's accounting, all my bad guys should act roughly the same. That's a villain? Or (and I have seen this happen within a very logical and fair–gamewise–context) supposing the character has a choice of dying slowly and nastily or converting to demon-worship with attendant alignment and behavior modification. Supposing the character decides to live nastily rather than die that way (would I? Maybe, maybe not. . .)? Does the player not now play that character in a way that might "turn (that player's) stomach" in real life?

In short, I compartmentalize my characters. I give them time, effort, sweat and, occasionally, tears. I simply refuse to lend them my psychie. That belongs to me and not to what is, ultimately, a sheet of paper and/or a painted hunk of tin/lead.

Clint Bigglestone
Oakland, CA

LETTER FROM JOHN CONCERNING D&D VARIANTS

Dear Readers,

DW is dedicated to covering the RPG field as a whole. This includes publishing material that is specifically applicable only to a specific game, if it is good, such as James M. Ward's *Gamma World* variant in *DW 5*, for the benefit of those who enjoy that game as well as for theinformation of those who don't, but might be interested in the subject. *DW* will continue to publish such articles whenever we can get them, on the theory that variety is essential to what we are trying to achieve–and if a reader doesn't like one or two articles in a given issue, the odds are there will be others in the same issue that person will enjoy.

Tom Drake's letter in *DW 5* was an excellent rebuttal to those who decry printing rules designed to be used in *D&D* (or any other particular game–although nobody seems to object to *DW*'s printing *RQ* cults, for example).

Some of the material published in *DW* will necessarily be directed to *D&D* and *AD&D*, simply becaue these games have sold more copies and are presumably played by more FRPers than any other. To ignore their interests would not only be antisocial, it would be stupid, because it would deny *DW* many potential readers. Furthermore, as Tom Drake and Scott Bizar so perceptively pointed out, material directed at one game can often be adapted or used as a source of inspiration for use in another game, if readers are willing to be flexible. So I suggest that *DW*'s readers would do better to read an article on any game with the attitude of looking for useful material instead of rejecting something simply because it is nominally designed for a game other than their own favorite game.

John T. Sapienza, Jr.
Washington, DC

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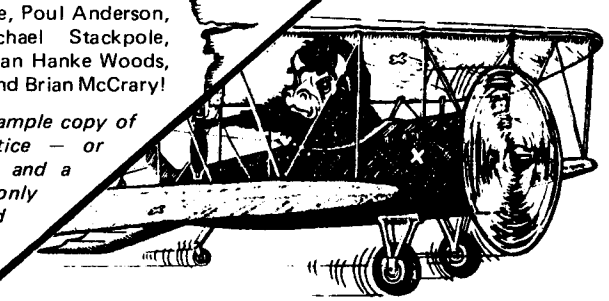
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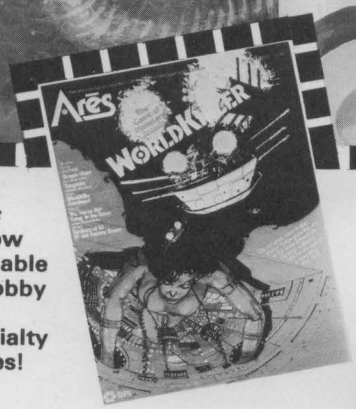
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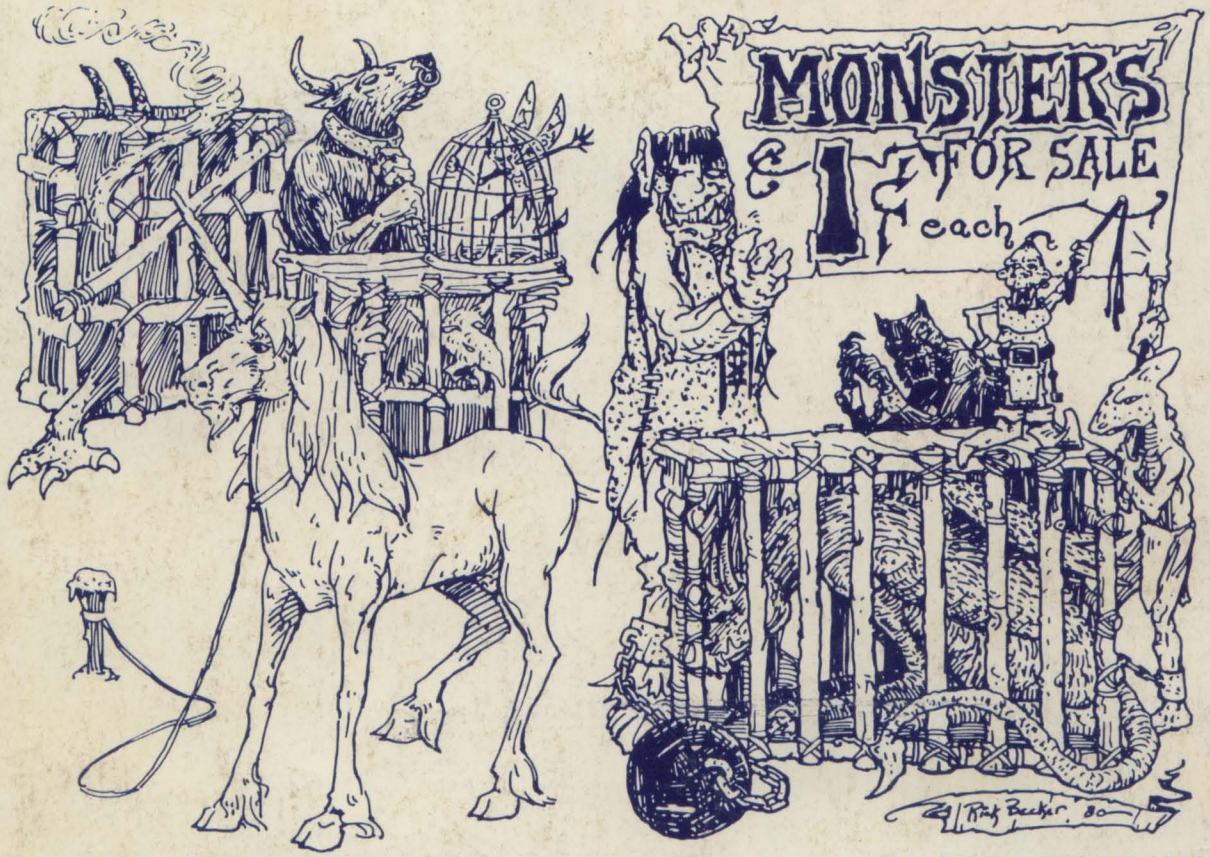
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Gathered by signatures into a strong perfect binding, *FOES* is similar to *All the Worlds' Monsters 3* in construction and durability; it will last a long time. All the statistics are presented in exactly the same fashion, allowing a check--off sheet (printed on the inside back cover) system to be used; a *FOES* statistic can be used dozens of times, if you like. And, for the first time, every character type has been drawn to scale—you can really see the difference between a wyvern and a wyrm, or a pixie and a dwarf. Every class of creature is also illustrated separately in typical activities—beneficent or bloody. **FOES, 112 pages, 8¼ x 10¾,, by David Forthoffer; illustrations, color cover by Rick Becker. Now at your local game store, or postpaid from Chaosium Inc. $11.95**

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